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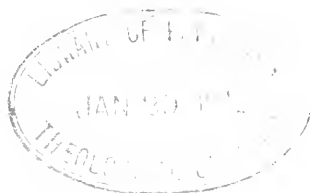
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# The American Church History Series

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VOLUME V





*American Church History*

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A  
HISTORY OF METHODISTS  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES

BY

J. M. BUCKLEY



New York  
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THE following catalogue, arranged alphabetically under authors' names, includes but a minority of the volumes consulted in the preparation of this work. In some instances they have been published in various editions and by several publishers. Next to the official journals and other documents of the different denominations, the most important authorities are the personal journals of Wesley, Coke, Asbury, Garrettson, and other founders; the histories of Jesse Lee, Nathan Bangs, and Abel Stevens, in particular the last-named, whose works are invaluable and deserve the everlasting gratitude of both English and American Methodism. Bond, Emory, and Wakeley rendered valuable service; and Neely and Tigert pursued, in the order of time in which their names are placed, important investigations into the subjects comprehended under the titles of their works, and displayed the results in a clear and comprehensive manner.

"The Wesley Memorial Volume," edited by Clark, and the "Lives of Methodist Bishops," edited by Flood and Hamilton, are very useful, the latter containing an immense amount of information in small compass.

The special histories of the various branches of American Methodism, and the biographies of their founders, are indispensable.

Among the biographies none surpasses Paine's "Life of McKendree," which is a mine of antiquarian knowledge and a repository of the writings of McKendree, Soule, and other controlling minds among those who gave Methodism its final forms.

The "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," by Gross Alexander, treats many interesting phases of the life and growth of that body, and afforded aid in investigations required by the plan of this work. The works of Lucius C. Matlack on the slavery controversy admirably fill a place occupied by no other publications.

The reports of different organizations, the minutes of Annual Conferences, the "Methodist Magazine," the reviews, and the files of the weekly periodicals of American Methodism have been searched, and a large mass of unpublished epistolary correspondence and other manuscript examined. It is believed that the bibliography here given will afford sufficient indication to those who may desire to examine authorities.

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## PRELIMINARY.

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THE purpose of this volume is to distinguish Methodism from other forms of Protestant Christianity in the United States; to trace its origin and follow its development, explain the modifications which it has undergone, and to perform these functions for the different denominations into which, in the course of one hundred and thirty years, it has divided. To do these things fully would expand the work to the dimensions of a library. Yet if events be selected with judgment, condensed with rigor, and unfolded in proper order, the result may be a portraiture sufficiently exact to enable those who are to derive their knowledge of Methodism therefrom to recognize the different religious physiognomies delineated, and to suggest to such as desire more extended study the routes of investigation which should be pursued.

There are peculiar difficulties. In the earliest documents dates are often omitted, sometimes incorrectly recorded, and in other cases the same event is by different authors assigned to various dates. The orthography of names is even more uncertain. Reports of important proceedings are frequently partial, and occasionally in legislative enactments phrases are omitted or transposed so as to obscure or modify the sense.

What, however, has been ascertained is herein affirmatively stated; what is doubtful is so represented. The most important facts, after almost incredible pains, have been authenticated.

The scale of the work will not admit of giving all the

authorities, but in seriously controverted points depending upon a limited number of witnesses they are stated.

Comparatively few local details of the last eighty years are given. The history of Conferences, as of States, must be left to specialists. Yet such acts, however limited in origin, which affected the movements or spirit of one or more of the branches of the tree whose growth is described are recorded.

Methodism from the beginning evoked antagonisms, and until nearly a hundred years had passed was never free from controversy with conscientious opponents. It is not within the province of the historian of his own communion, and in part of his own time, to pronounce judgment upon the motives of those professing "like precious faith." But it is his duty to display their words and actions, and the utterances and deeds of those who antagonized them, so far as possible as they would present them. These, with the results of the conflict, will enable those who read to estimate the relation of events to human and divine providence—the factors in the development of every form of Christianity.

If what is called history be untrue, it is a romance far more dangerous than an avowed work of fiction. Either ignoring pertinent facts or emphasizing them unduly may give to a truthful form of words the effect of falsity.

Methodism is highly organized, and organization implies human centers of power. Hence the characteristics and work of individual men occupy a large place. The history of the body is but the history of those who have made it what it is. This is especially true of churches episcopally governed, the bishops being invested with the power of stationing and removing pastors of churches, and also being *ex officio* presiding officers in the General and Annual Conferences. As the General Conference



unites the legislative, judicial, and executive prerogatives in one body, it, more than the ruling assemblies of most other denominations, demands a thorough treatment.

The most potent forces which account for the numerical increase of Methodism, the mutual labors of pastors and people in the local societies, are incapable of historic description. Yet without them the visible fabric of Methodism would be as the log hut in which the fathers preached compared with the elaborate ecclesiastical structures which prosperity has made possible.

Many a minister, brilliant in intellect, the luster of whose piety gave a mellow light to the coruscations of his genius, has left no visible trace which the earthly historian can reproduce. Some of these were from other countries, attracted to America by the more rapid growth of Methodism in this free land.

Such was John Summerfield, a native of England, a star of purest ray, who for five years drew all eyes to Methodism by his preaching and platform addresses in behalf of the Missionary Society, the American Bible Society, and the American Tract Society. Yet he was but twenty-seven years of age when his vital force was exhausted and his fervent spirit set free.

The succeeding pages will be scanned in vain for the biographies of many such men. The record of their impassioned discourses, their private appeals, their prayers beside those who lay on sick-beds, their words of hope, consolation, or admonition as they stood between the living and the dead, is in the books that shall be opened at the last day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that academic and honorary titles are conspicuous by their absence. The limits would not permit their frequent recurrence; in most instances the names are so well known as to make titles superfluous; and in some cases neither the exact degree nor the name of the institution conferring it could be ascertained.



# THE METHODISTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE FATHERLAND OF METHODISM.

METHODISM did not originate in the Western Hemisphere. It was transported across the sea, planted in a fertile soil, and brought forth fruit after its own kind. Montesquieu asserts that "in the infancy of societies the chiefs of the state form the institutions; afterward the institutions form the chiefs of the state."<sup>1</sup>

Among the founders of Methodism one name is preëminent. Others either derived their impulse from his persevering and victorious zeal, or submitted to his direction; so that it may be said, with no detriment to their fame, that without him Methodism had not been. Emerson discerned and recognized this in saying: "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man: as monachism, of the Hermit Anthony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; abolition, of Clarkson. Scipio, Milton called 'the height of Rome'; and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons."

<sup>1</sup> "Grandeur and Decadence of the Romans," Baker's translation, chap. i., p. 21.

It is proposed, therefore, in accounting for the springing of American Methodism fully fledged from the brain and heart of Robert Strawbridge and Philip Embury, to show what formed the moral and intellectual personality of John Wesley, and how he formed Methodism.

For centuries prior to the sixteenth the state of religion and morals throughout the Christian world had steadily deteriorated, although several times during the middle ages the minds of men asserted their fundamental rights against the corruption of Rome. Little knowledge existed, and that was chiefly confined to the clergy. In this period "not one man in five hundred could have spelled his way through a psalm. Books were few and costly. Copies of the Bible, inferior in beauty and clearness to those which every cottager may now command, sold for prices which many priests could not afford to give."<sup>1</sup>

Every archbishop of Canterbury acknowledged the papal supremacy, and received in return the pallium, the sign of authority and the pledge of submission; and all the enactments concerning transubstantiation, confession, indulgences, and the primacy of the pope, with the condemnation of the Albigenses and Waldenses, were accepted by the English church, whose ambassador was present at the Fourth Lateran Council, which sat in 1215, when Magna Charta was signed. All the great orders flourished in England, and the Mendicant Friars, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Carmelites—respectively known as Gray, Black, and White Friars—as soon as established migrated thither successively.

For the three hundred years prior to the reign of Henry VIII. England "had been the tamest part of Christendom to the papal authority, and had been accordingly dealt with. But though the Parliaments and two or three high-

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's "History of England," vol. i., p. 13.

spirited kings had given some interruptions to the cruel exactions and other illegal proceedings of the court of Rome, yet that court always gained their designs in the end.”<sup>1</sup>

It was quite common in those days for men who had committed the worst crimes to take orders; for then not only were all past misdeeds condoned, but they could not be arrested for any crime committed after holy orders were given until they had been degraded; in the meantime they were the bishop's prisoners, and protected against the civil law.

As the people, though often worse, are seldom better than the clergy, the terrible impeachment of the former by Wickliffe, in the middle of the fourteenth century, is conclusive as to the general condition.

“They haunt taverns out of measure, and stir up laymen to drunkenness, idleness, and cursed swearing, cheating, and fighting. For they will not follow earnestly in their spiritual office after Christ and his apostles, and therefore they resort to plays at tables, chess, and hazard, and roar in the streets, and sit at the taverns till they have lost their wits, and then chide and strive, and fight sometimes. And sometimes they have neither eye nor tongue nor hand nor foot to help themselves for drunkenness. By this example the ignorant people suppose that drunkenness is no sin; but he that wasteth most of poor men's goods at taverns, making himself and other men drunken, is most praised for nobleness, courtesy, freeness, and worthiness.”<sup>2</sup>

Henry, second son of Henry VII. and his queen, Elizabeth of York, was born at Greenwich in 1491. In April, 1509, he succeeded his father on the throne, and two months later wedded his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon.

<sup>1</sup> Burnet's "History of the Reformation in England," vol. i., bk. i., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> "A Book about the Clergy," by J. C. Jeaffreson, vol. i., p. 47.

During his reign changes were made the effects of which upon the civil and ecclesiastical government of England and its dependencies, upon the visible forms of Christianity in every English-speaking country, and upon the laws, institutions, and social and individual life of their peoples, continue to this day.

Until his twenty-ninth year he was devoted to the pope and eager to prove his loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformation was progressing rapidly on the Continent, which was speedily plunged into universal war. Cardinal Wolsey attempted the impossible double task of reforming the clergy and suppressing the religious revolution. At this stage arose the controversy between Henry VIII. and the pope concerning his relations to Catherine. His father had had doubts of the legitimacy of the marriage, and a foreign court had made objection to intermarriage with the children of Catherine; yet, as there were no male heirs, the probability of a disputed succession in the event of his death agitated the people of the realm.

In 1527 a demand for a declaration that the marriage was null and void was formally laid before the pope. The temporizing of the pontiff irritated the king, who discarded Wolsey as not being sufficiently zealous. In 1529 a Parliament was convened which took important and far-reaching steps, the end of which was probably not foreseen.

The first formal step, however, toward the separation of Henry VIII. from the Church of Rome was taken in 1531, the year after the death of Wolsey, when the attorney-general filed a bill against the whole body of the clergy, as having been the favorers and abettors of Wolsey in breaking the Act of Præmunire—an act intended to check evasions of existing statutes against those appointed by papal provision to English benefices or dignities.

The Convocation of the clergy voted a large sum of money to the king, since, if this charge were sustained, the law provided that those who had violated the Act of Præmunire should be out of the king's protection, their goods and chattels, lands and attainments, forfeited to the king, and their persons attached wherever found. Henry, however, refused to accept the money unless words were inserted in the preamble to the effect that he was the protector and head of the church and clergy of England. The latter were alarmed, but after long debate consented to yield so far as to recognize the king in these words: "Chief protector, the only and supreme lord, and *as far as the law of Christ will allow*, the supreme head of the English church and clergy."

In 1532 Henry VIII. wedded Anne Boleyn, and instantly was published a papal threat of excommunication. Whereupon the English Parliament, at the instigation of the king, passed an act "forbidding appeals from English ecclesiastical courts to Rome," and Archbishop Cranmer declared the marriage of Catherine null and void.

The pope's authority in England was annulled in 1534, and an act declared Henry VIII. supreme head of the church. With the sanction of the Convocation, in 1536 he prescribed the doctrines to be taught in the churches. The Scriptures and the ancient creeds were to be the standards of faith; the traditions or decrees of the church were excluded from authority; the doctrine of justification by faith was clearly expressed; four of the seven sacraments required by the Church of Rome were omitted; purgatory was spoken of in a doubtful manner; but transubstantiation, confession to priests, and the worship of saints and images were retained.

In 1536 the pope prepared, and two years later published, a bull of deposition, in which he "deprived the king

of his crown, laid the kingdom under an interdict, declared his issue by Anne Boleyn illegitimate, dissolved all leagues which any Catholic princes had made with him, freed his subjects from all oaths of allegiance, cut off their commerce with foreign states, and declared it lawful for any one to seize them, to make slaves of their persons, and to convert their effects to his own use."<sup>1</sup>

But waves of innovation began to roar and beat against the church, until Henry himself was affrighted. In the year 1539, by the aid of influential opposers of the Reformation, he succeeded in securing the passage of a statute by the Commons, approved by the Lords, making it a penal offense to speak against any one of the Six Articles. The first of these affirms transubstantiation; the second that "communion in both kinds, bread and wine," is not necessary to salvation to all; third, that priests after admission to orders are forbidden by the law of God to marry; fourth, that vows of chastity are required by the law of God; fifth, that private masses ought to be continued; sixth, that auricular confession is expedient and necessary, and should be retained. Under this statute, which was enforced for eight years, many were brought to the stake and to prison.

Toward the close of his life Henry VIII. was much dissatisfied, and in proroguing Parliament in person, "after thanking them for their loving attention to him, . . . he complained of their dissensions, disputes, and animosities in religion. He told them that the pulpits were become a kind of battery against each other; that one preacher called the other a heretic and Anabaptist, which was retaliated by the opprobrious appellations of papist and hypocrite; that he had permitted to his people the use of the Scrip-

<sup>1</sup> Hume's "History of England," vol. iii., p. 213; quoted by Hume from Saunders.



tures, not to furnish them with materials for disputing and railing, but that he might enable them to inform their consciences and instruct their families; that it grieved his heart to find how that precious gem was prostituted by being introduced into the conversation of every ale-house and tavern, and employed as a pretense for decrying the spiritual and legal pastors; and that he was sorry to observe that the Word of God, while it was the object of so much anxious speculation, *had very little influence on their practice*; and that though an imaginary knowledge so much abounded, charity was daily going to decay.”<sup>1</sup>

As his health failed he grew more severe. He promoted the burning of Annie Askew, “a young woman of merit as well as beauty,” closely connected with the queen and many of the chief ladies at court, at the same time with three men, one of whom was a priest of his own household, because they did not agree with his views of the real presence; and the queen narrowly escaped the same fate. He spent his declining days in endeavoring to compass the death of the Duke of Norfolk, whose execution had been ordered for the morning of the 28th of January; but the king died the previous night.

The most favorable estimate of Henry VIII. is given by Hume, who says: “A catalogue of his vices would comprehend many of the worst qualities incident to human nature: violence, cruelty, profusion, rapacity, injustice, obstinacy, arrogance, bigotry, presumption, caprice; but neither was he subject to all these vices in the most extreme degree, nor was he, at intervals, altogether destitute of virtues; he was sincere, open, gallant, liberal, and capable of at least a temporary friendship and attachment.”<sup>2</sup>

Macaulay comprehends in this passage his view of the

<sup>1</sup> Hume's “History of England,” vol. iii., p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 309.

purposes of the king with regard to the church: "Henry VIII. attempted to constitute an Anglican church differing from the Roman church on the point of supremacy, and on that point alone. . . . [His character, position, and supporters] enabled him to bid defiance to both the extreme parties; to burn as heretics those who avowed the tenets of Luther, and hang as traitors those who owned the authority of the pope."<sup>1</sup>

The apologists of Henry VIII. are reliable witnesses to the general corruption of the age. One says: "He was no hero, no ideal man or king. He shared fully in the coarseness and indelicacy of the age." The reformation accomplished in his reign was superficial, though it contained the germs of something better. The clergy were covetous, given to secular affairs, devoted to pleasures, many indulging in licentiousness which they scarcely took the pains to conceal; and the tendency to immorality pervaded all classes.

When Henry VIII. died, his only son, Edward, whose mother was Jane Seymour, was but ten years of age. Nominally he was king until his death at the age of fifteen and a half, and important measures marked his reign. His uncle, the Earl of Hertford, was named Protector and created Duke of Somerset. In two years his place was taken by Dudley, Earl of Warwick, created Duke of Northumberland, and two years later Somerset was beheaded under charges of treason and felony.

Both these protectors, however, carried on the Reformation. The first Book of Common Prayer was authorized in 1549, and in 1552 the second appeared, which diverged much more widely from the Roman Catholic doctrine. These were substituted for the missal and breviary. Several bishops rebelled and were deprived of their sees.

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's "History of England," vol. i., p. 15.

Just before the death of Edward VI. the council required bishops to remove the altars from all parish churches in their dioceses.

While the boy king was suffering from a mortal illness he was induced by the intrigues of the Duke of Northumberland to name Lady Jane Grey as his successor. The cause of this attempt to change the succession was that Mary, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Catherine of Aragon—who had been brought up in the Catholic faith, but after the execution of Queen Anne Boleyn had acknowledged her father as head of the church in England; confessed that her mother's marriage was unlawful; and yielded an outward conformity to the successive changes in religion during Henry's reign, on account of which she again received her father's favor, and the succession was restored to her by act of Parliament—had, during the reign of her brother, Edward VI., steadily refused conformity to the Protestant religion.

On the death of Edward VI. Lady Jane Grey was actually proclaimed, but Mary entered London in triumph; and though she began by declaring to the people of Suffolk that she would never change the laws of Edward VI., she immediately proceeded to undo his work; put Lady Jane Grey and her husband to death on the charge of treason, liberated the imprisoned Catholic bishops, and shut up Colgate, Archbishop of York, Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, Ridley of London, Hooper of Gloucester, and Latimer. Mary's wrath even threatened the safety of Elizabeth, her sister.

The mass, though contrary to law, was revived. Cranmer, who protested against the mass, and declared that those who asserted that he approved it made use of his name falsely, was convicted of high treason.

Mary then sent messages to Pope Julius III. informing

him that she earnestly desired to reconcile herself and her kingdom to him, and asked that Cardinal Pole might be made legate to transact the business.

The Convocation was called at the same time with the Parliament. The Romanists offered to dispute the points controverted between the two communions. "The Protestants pushed the dispute as far as the clamor and noise of their antagonists would permit; and they fondly imagined that they had obtained some advantage, when, in the course of the debate (on transubstantiation), they obliged the Catholics to see that according to their doctrine Christ had at his last supper held himself in his hand, and had *swallowed and eaten himself.*"<sup>1</sup>

In 1554 Mary married Philip II. of Spain, and blended the remorseless, inquisitorial, persecuting cruelty of the Spanish spirit with her own fanatical and bloodthirsty disposition. When Cardinal Pole arrived, invested by the pope with powers as legate, he was presented to the king and queen, and asked the Parliament to reconcile itself and the kingdom to the apostolic see. Both houses, in an address to Philip and Mary, acknowledged that they had been guilty "of the most horrible defection from the true church," and besought their Majesties that, "since they were happily unaffected with that criminal secession, they would intercede with the holy father for the absolution and forgiveness of their penitent subjects." Cardinal Pole, in the name of the pope, absolved both the kingdom and Parliament, offered them every cynosure, and received them into the church.

Cardinal Pole opposed persecution, but Mary and Philip preferred the arguments of Gardiner. Then began scenes which seem to prove that "no human depravity can equal

<sup>1</sup> Collier, vol. ii., p. 356; quoted by Hume, "History of England," vol. iii., p. 399.

revenge and cruelty covered with the mantle of religion," though the French Revolution subsequently demonstrated that hatred of religion in the names of liberty, equality, and fraternity might perpetrate still darker deeds.

Systematic persecution began with the burning of John Rogers, prebendary of St. Paul's, and followed with the execution of Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester; Saunders, burned at Coventry; Taylor, parson of Hadley; Philpot, Archdeacon of Winchester; Farrar, Bishop of St. David's, burned in his own diocese; Ridley, Bishop of London, formerly Bishop of Worcester, burned in the same flames with Latimer at Oxford. The persecuting spirit of Mary became almost a delirium, and a proclamation was issued that whoever had any books of heresy, etc., and did not presently burn them without reading or showing them, should be esteemed rebels, and without further delay executed by martial law.

The persecution of Protestants under Mary developed a higher degree of moral courage than had of late existed in England. The lowest estimate of the number of those who suffered death for adherence to Protestantism in her reign is three hundred. A high Roman Catholic authority acknowledges that "every one knows with how great severity Mary's government proceeded against the Protestants—Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and many others being burned, and hundreds forced to flee for their lives to foreign countries."<sup>1</sup> The average morality of the kingdom during her reign sank still lower than it was during the reign of Henry VIII.

Upon the death of Mary, Elizabeth, who had narrowly escaped with her life, and had been kept in close confinement during most of Mary's reign, ascended the throne, being crowned on the 17th of November, 1558. The

<sup>1</sup> "A Catholic Dictionary," by William E. Addis and Thomas Arnold, M.A.

bishops and higher clergy whom Elizabeth found on her accession were generally stanch Catholics; but Elizabeth was the daughter of Anne Boleyn, and two popes had declared her mother's marriage to Henry VIII. null and void. She was under strong personal temptation to ally herself and her kingdom with Protestantism, and there is reason also to believe that she was sincerely opposed to many of the Romish doctrines.

Men of eminence, ability, and force of character became associated with her, and reconstruction began at once. Cardinal Pole being dead, the Archbishop of York, in his capacity as chancellor, held the seals, and these were at once given to Bacon. As Mary had devoted herself to the reëstablishment of the Roman Catholic faith and worship, so with equal zeal Elizabeth bent her energies to the restoration of the Protestant faith. One of her first acts was to forbid the Bishop of Carlisle to elevate the host while saying mass, thus indicating that she did not accept the dogma of transubstantiation. On this account Archbishop Heath refused to take part in her coronation, and only one bishop was found willing to participate.

In December of the same year she inhibited all preaching "for the present." The bishops, however, were opposed to reformation. The court secured a Parliament which repealed the persecuting laws of Mary and gave the queen all power to regulate doctrine, discipline, worship, to appoint all bishops, and "to establish high commission courts with powers nearly equal to the inquisition." The second Prayer-book of Edward VI. was restored. Parliament having adopted Protestantism as the religion of England, every bishop, with one exception, seceded therefrom and refused the oath. That one, Kitchen, Bishop of Landaff, was an idle abbot under Henry VIII., Protestant under Edward, returned to Romanism under Mary, and

took the oath of supremacy under Elizabeth, and finished as a Parliament Protestant. Isaac Disraeli, in "Curiosities of Literature," writes that "a pun spread the contumely of his name; for they said that he had always loved the Kitchen better than the church."

It was during these changes that the proverb "the Vicar of Bray will be Vicar of Bray still" originated. For the vicar referred to was a papist in the time of Henry VIII., Protestant under Edward VI., again papist under Mary, and finally a Protestant under Elizabeth. According to Fuller, when he was accused of being an inconstant changeling, he said: "Not so neither; for if I changed my religion I am sure I kept true to my principle, which is to live and die the Vicar of Bray."

The Convocation of 1563 adopted the Thirty-nine Articles, which had been prepared in the latter part of the reign of Edward VI. They distinguish the doctrines of the Church of England from those of the Roman Catholic communion by introducing the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone, denying purgatory and reducing the sacraments from seven to two, and by affirming many anti-Roman principles. The pope issued a bull deposing Elizabeth. For a while Catholics who did not leave the country went to church with Protestants, taking pains not to enter or leave the building with them, expecting that the authority of the pope would be restored; but the Council of Trent decided such attendance at Protestant worship to be sinful.

About half of the cathedral clergy, archdeacons, and heads of colleges refused the oath. All such were expelled, and the Protestants ejected under Mary were recalled to fill the vacant positions. Matthew Parker, formerly a Catholic priest, who in the time of Mary had married and thus been compelled to go into obscurity, was now made

Archbishop of Canterbury. Elizabeth appointed bishops who would favor the Reformation, and summoned to consecrate them the ex-bishops who had been removed by Mary. All the clergy of England, except about two hundred, obeyed the fifty-two injunctions that Elizabeth issued regulating devotion, discipline, holy days, and clerical duties.

During her reign Elizabeth was constantly in conflict with the adherents of the Romish system, and as the Puritan party was continually growing stronger, she was bitterly opposed to and by them. Professor Reid, of Glasgow, observes concerning this phase of Elizabeth's character that she was "fond of splendid worship, and . . . rigorously enforced uniformity. Thus the Reformation was arrested, and the Established Church has remained substantially the same as in the year 1562."<sup>1</sup>

The personal character and moral influence of the reign of Elizabeth have been much debated. Protestants have praised, Romanists condemned her. A judicious critic observes that recent inquiries have resulted in a less favorable view than has prevailed in England. Shakespeare, Bacon, and Spencer flourished in her reign, which was also marked by great enterprises and discoveries; but under various acts one hundred and twenty-eight priests and members of religious orders, fifty-eight laymen, and three women were put to death. Such a succession of terrible deeds, including the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, and an attachment to the unworthy Earls of Leicester and Essex, together with the natural tendency of such transitions, was compatible with only a slight elevation, if any, in the conduct and spirit of the people.

James I. of Scotland, a character who has been the puz-

<sup>1</sup> "Mosheim's Institutes of Ecclesiastical History," by James Murdock, D.D.; revised and supplemental notes added by James Seaton Reid, D.D.



zle of historians, succeeded Elizabeth. He was educated among the Presbyterians, and from the General Assembly in 1590—where he thanked God that he was king of the sincerest kirk in the world, and thus addressed the members: “I charge you, my ministers, doctors, elders, nobles, gentlemen, and barons, to stand to your purity and to exhort your people to do the same, and I forsooth as long as I brook my life shall do the same”—down to his removal to England in 1603, he declared himself conscientiously attached to that church.

When he began his journey all religious parties in England paid court to him; the Dutch and French Protestants settled in the country waited upon him, the bishops sent their envoys, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge appealed to him in behalf of the Establishment, and the Puritans sent him a petition signed by eight hundred of their ministers.

The same year a conference was held between the Episcopalians and the Puritans. According to Neal, the former were allowed to select nine bishops and as many dignitaries of the church; on the part of the Puritans the king selected one Scotch and four English divines. It proved a mock conference, in which the king went over entirely to the Established Church. The explanation given by Mosheim is this: “King James, who was eager to grasp supreme and unlimited power, at once judged that the Presbyterian form of church government was adverse to his designs, and the Episcopal favorable to them; because Presbyterian churches form a kind of republic, which is subject to a number of leading men all possessing equal rank and power, while Episcopal churches more nearly resemble a monarchy. The very name of a republic, synod, or council was odious to the king, and he therefore studied most earnestly to increase the power of the bishops, and publicly declared

that without bishops the throne could not be safe." <sup>1</sup> But for a long time he did what he could to preserve the Genevan doctrines.

With a majority of the clergy he afterward inclined to the Arminian doctrine concerning decrees, and before his death had become a mortal enemy of the Puritan faith. In some respects he strengthened the cause of Protestantism, especially by the preparation and authorization of the translation of the Bible; but his reign promoted neither piety nor morality.

He executed Sir Walter Raleigh under circumstances which proved him destitute of the elements of true nobility. The longer he lived the more violent became his contests with Parliament. He was superstitious; in minor matters of morals, self-opinionated and autocratic, and in great questions lacked breadth and dignity; and his career closed in open hostility to the Presbyterians and with the country upon the verge of civil war.

Macaulay's estimate of the character and reign of Charles I. is discriminating: "He had received from nature a far better understanding, far stronger will, and a far keener and firmer temper than his father's. . . . It would be unjust to deny that Charles had some of the qualities of a good, and even of a great prince. . . . His taste in literature and art was excellent, his manner dignified though not gracious, his domestic life without blemish. Faithlessness was the chief cause of his disasters, and is the chief stain on his memory. He was, in truth, impelled by an incurable propensity to dark and crooked ways. . . . There is reason to believe that he was perfidious, not only from constitution and from habit, but also on principle. He seems to have learned from the theologians whom he most esteemed that between him and his subjects there could be nothing of the nature

<sup>1</sup> "Mosheim's Institutes of Ecclesiastical History," seventh edition, p. 820.

of mutual contract; . . . and that in every promise which he made there was an implied reservation that such promise might be broken in case of necessity, and that of the necessity he was the sole judge.”<sup>1</sup>

The Commons, not sympathizing with his efforts to extend the regal power and make it superior to the laws, to subject the whole church of Great Britain and Ireland to an episcopal form of government, or to reject the institutions and doctrines of the followers of Calvin, determined to place the king in a position where he would be obliged to submit to their wishes or attack fundamental principles of the British constitution. Religiously he was a zealous Episcopalian and a decided Arminian, and “though no papist, he liked a papist much better than a Puritan.”

The proceedings of Laud, to whom the execution of the designs of Charles was intrusted, as Bishop of London, and subsequently as Archbishop of Canterbury, though characterized by ability, were fierce, headlong, and inconsiderate.

The king soon decided to defy the law. He prorogued the first Parliament and on his own authority levied taxes, convoked a second Parliament and dissolved it, threw his chief opponents into prison, billeted soldiers on the people, and substituted martial for civil law. The third Parliament proving more obstinate than its predecessors, he temporized by making promises which he subsequently disregarded—as he intended to do when he made them—and attempted to make himself a despot by reducing the Parliament to a nullity. From March, 1629, to April, 1640, England was without a Parliament. In 1644–45 Laud was impeached by the Commons, tried by the Lords, found guilty, and beheaded. This Parliament, principally under the control of Presbyterians and Independents, abolished the form of church government by bishops, and repealed

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's “History of England,” vol. i., p. 24.

whatever was contrary to the principles of the Calvinists as represented by the Genevans.

After the brave attempt of John Hampden to stand for personal liberty by refusing to pay the illegal shipping tax, the best men began to flee the kingdom. During the war with Scotland the two parties—those inclined to limit the power of the crown more and more, and those “ready to lay all the laws and franchises at the feet of the kings”—appeared in a distinct form, though, as is always the case, the majority of each were more or less conservative, while the enthusiasts and extremists were most conspicuous. On the king’s side were the larger number of the nobles, all the opulent citizens with their dependents, the great body of the clergy, and the Unionists, all laymen of the Anglican faith. These had allies “much less decorous than themselves. The Puritan austerity drove to the king’s faction all who made pleasure their business, who affected gallantry, splendor of dress, or taste in the lighter arts,” and those who lived by amusing, “from the painter and comic poet down to the rope-dancer and the merry-andrew.”

The English Roman Catholics to a man espoused the king’s side. In defending this the Catholic writers declare that they had no alternative; they could expect some justice from the king, but none from the Parliament. The wife of Charles was a daughter of France, and of their own faith.

The opposition consisted of the small farmers, merchants, and shop-keepers, a powerful minority of the aristocracy—such as the Earls of Northumberland, Bedford, Warwick, and Essex—the whole body of Protestant nonconformists, those members of the Established Church who were Calvinists, and most of the municipal corporations.

Upon a fair view of Catholic, Protestant, and critical history of the time it is impossible to believe that the reign

of Charles I. promoted either religion or morality. Although the first Presbyterian church was established in England in 1572, the majority of the English clergy who inclined to Presbyterian views did not withdraw from the Established Church, but were distinguished by the general title of Puritans. Persecution drove many of them to the New World and to various parts of Europe; yet the party greatly increased during the reigns of James I. and Charles I.

Episcopacy was abolished in 1642, and a year later the famous Westminster Assembly was convened by Parliament, which commanded one hundred and twenty-one of the ablest theologians, with thirty lay assessors, to assist it in settling the principles, ritual, and government of the Church of England. The majority were Presbyterians; there were a few Episcopalians, some Independents, and four commissioners from the General Assembly of the Scottish church, asking the Westminster Assembly and Parliament to make a solemn league and covenant to establish a uniform religion throughout the three kingdoms.

Within two years serious differences arose between the Assembly and Parliament. The English Presbyterians proposed to establish Presbyterianism throughout England, with no toleration of dissenters. Supported by the weight of the Scottish nation, they sent petitions in the name of the lord mayor, aldermen, and Common Council of London. This divided the Commons, as the Independents and other dissenters sent up counter-petitions; and the debate in the Assembly waxed so hot that the Independents and others withdrew. Extraordinary resolutions followed, and the country divided into sects, of which Edwards, a contemporary author, mentions fifteen: Independents, Brownists, Millinaries, Antinomians, Anabaptists, Libertines, Familists, Enthusiasts, Seekers, Perfectionists, So-

cinians, Arians, anti-Trinitarians, anti-Scripturists, and Skeptics.

Notwithstanding that Charles I. was a prisoner, he refused to consent to the proposed new forms of government. Parliament fell under the control of the army, consisting principally of dissenters, who took active part in the discussions, and allowed dissent from the then established religion, Presbyterianism. But when the Scots invaded England to rescue Charles I., the army having to divide and march in different directions, the Presbyterians seized the opportunity to enforce their doctrines and usages. Finally Parliament impeached and executed the king, but not until he had reduced the government to a despotism.

Oliver Cromwell during the Protectorate offered free toleration to all sects except papists and Episcopalians, but forbade the clergy to meddle with politics. For some years the right of ordaining parish ministers had been exclusively possessed by the Presbyterians. Cromwell appointed a board of "thirty triers," composed of Presbyterians and Independents and two or three Baptists, to examine and license preachers throughout England, and lay commissioners in every county "with full power to check scandalous, impudent, and incompetent ministers and schoolmasters"; and Parliament confirmed these ordinances.

When Cromwell died and his son Richard came into power, the Presbyterians had relinquished the hope of obtaining ecclesiastical dominion over England under that form of government. They therefore, in 1659, formed an alliance with the Royalists to restore the king, who was quite ready to negotiate satisfactorily to the Parliament. The Presbyterians were as strenuously opposed to the views of the republicans as to the ascendancy of Episcopal forms. Charles II. ascended the throne unfettered by any

stipulation concerning religion, and speedily established Episcopacy without toleration to dissenters. In 1662 the Act of Uniformity was passed, making it criminal to dissent from the Established Episcopal Church. A few Presbyterian clergymen conformed, but more than two thousand, most of whom were Presbyterians, were expelled.

Charles II. was incapable of ruling wisely or justly. The influence of his reign was evil. He lacked genuine ambition, was essentially frivolous, indolent, impatient, and without conscience, vacillating between infidelity and popery. Morality had so degenerated that "poetry stooped to be the panderer of every low desire; ridicule, instead of putting guilt and error to the blush, turned her formidable shafts against innocence and truth."

Joseph Jefferson, in discussing the influence of the plays of Shakespeare, says that "with the exception of one shameful hiatus in the time of Charles I. and Charles II., Shakespeare has always held the supremacy among English-speaking peoples. But he was too polite for those times. A foul court had forced upon the people dramas so terrible and so degraded that ladies went to the play wearing masks. The stain of those dramas has never utterly been wiped out, and it remains on the stage to this day." The church contended against it but feebly. The most corrupt of the people were politicians, but "scarcely any rank or profession," says Macaulay, "escaped the infection of the prevailing immorality."

Before the inconsistent career of Charles II. was closed by death he rejected the offices of the Church of England, confessed to a Roman Catholic priest, and received extreme unction and the Lord's Supper.

In the thirty-third year of his age James II. avowed his conversion to Romanism. A few years later attempts

were made to secure his exclusion from the succession, and he was ordered to quit the kingdom. To prevent the passage of such a bill Parliament was dissolved in 1680; but although twice "presented" as a popish recusant, in 1685 he ascended the throne. During his reign he aimed to restore the Roman Catholic religion, and to prevent Parliament from restricting either his despotic spirit or the constitution. Endeavoring meanwhile to cajole his subjects by a declaration in favor of liberty of conscience, he filled his army and council with Roman Catholics, but could not thereby deceive the dissenters. His constant innovations in religion and government finally united the people against him, and they invited the Prince of Orange to take the throne. When James, who had been ignorant of their purposes, heard of the invitation to William, he was terrified, repealed his obnoxious acts, and courted popularity; but it was then too late.

It is a singular fact in the history of those times that the Quakers, who came into existence as a community in the reign of Charles I., and the supporters of royalty among the Anglican clergy, reached from totally different premises the same conclusion—that no act of tyranny on the part of a prince can justify active resistance on the part of a subject. James II. had procured the enactment of laws expressly designed to "harry Puritans," but he found no fault with the Quakers; for, taking no part in civil affairs, they neither talked politics nor engaged in conspiracies. Making William Penn his familiar friend, he was very indulgent to them, "the only redeeming quality in his career as king."

Even the Roman Catholics, whose cause he espoused, have little to say in his favor. They declare that his zeal was not according to knowledge; "moreover, the scandalous immorality of his private life damaged his advocacy;



Episcopal Protestants could not be blamed for regarding with distrust the efforts of the married lover of Catherine Sedley to advance the interests of his religion by overriding the civil laws." <sup>1</sup>

William, who was a Calvinist, contributed to the enactment and enforcement of penal laws against the Roman Catholics. Papists, and those reputed to be such, were forbidden to live within ten miles of Westminster, and a horse worth more than five pounds belonging to any papist could be seized. The Toleration Act provided that nothing in the act could be construed to give "ease, benefit, or advantage to any papist." The Bill of Rights declared that no papist, or any one that married a papist, should inherit the crown. A reward of a hundred pounds was offered for information leading to the conviction of a Catholic priest for saying mass or keeping school; such priest would be imprisoned for life.

The occasion for these persecuting statutes was that in every department of the public service Roman Catholics "had much more than ten times as great an amount of patronage as they would have had under an impartial system." They had been made rulers of the Church of England, and yet the laws against popery were unrepealed.

The moral influence of William and Mary was better than that of most of their predecessors. Her character was remarkably fine, and his courage, decision, conscientiousness, and adherence to purpose were admirable; but his unpopularity with his subjects, growing in part out of his foreign origin and sympathies, and from the exercise of his qualities in connection with religious controversies, counteracted their effect. Dissensions were accentuated by the fact that the primate Sancroft and seven of the bishops refused to take oaths of allegiance to the new government, on ac-

<sup>1</sup> "A Catholic Dictionary," by William E. Addis and Thomas Arnold, M. A.

count of which they were suspended, and afterward those who survived deprived. Some of the clergy followed their example, being known with them as nonjurors.

Political corruption was so common that though the conscience of William was strongly opposed to it and he resolved to abstain from it, and during the first year of his reign did so, he yielded to the sophism that "those who receive the filthy lucre are corrupt already; he who bribes them does not make them wicked; he finds them so, and he merely prevents evil propensities from producing evil effects." Burnet remonstrated with him. The king responded: "Nobody hates bribery more than I; but I have to do with a set of men who must be managed in this way or not at all; I must strain a point or the country is lost."

On the death of William, in 1702, Anne, daughter of James II., ascended the throne. In her time public and private morality were at a lower ebb than before, though the spirit of the people was less sanguinary than in periods not remote. From the "Tatler," the "Spectator," and the "Guardian" the general condition of manners and morals can be inferred. It was a time of double dealing in politicians and even statesmen of all parties, and of rancor and duplicity in ecclesiastics in the way of preferment in the Church of England, and of those who sought power by manipulating dissenters and nonconformists. It was also a period in which the reflex influence of war added to the prevalent demoralization, and questions of the succession and of the union of England and Scotland diminished the courage and stimulated the subtlety of the ambitious.

Superstition was revived, for Queen Anne brought back the ceremony of "touching for the king's evil," which William III. had sufficient sense to reject; and the belief in witchcraft and omens was general. Drunkenness and reveling greatly increased, and a low estimate of woman

characterized both sexes. "Prudes" and "coquettes" were the least objectionable characters represented upon the stage, which had not recovered from the degradation of the time of the Stuarts.

The spirit of gambling was universally diffused, and, with few exceptions, the high and the low exhibited an almost total lack of refinement. The queen herself was not, even on her better side, a positive moral force, and the "good nature and generosity which procured her the name of the 'good Queen Anne' seem to have sprung as much from the indolence of her temper and the weakness of her understanding as from any active principle of benevolence."<sup>1</sup>

It would appear that from the time of Henry VIII. everything relating to religion—except morals—had received attention. The austerity of the Puritan party produced reactions, and unquestionably tended to hypocrisy in those whose interests required them to remain in connection with the Parliament party, and who found its rigorous discipline an intolerable burden. The mass of the people, transferred from one religious system to another with no option of their own, were either submissive or indifferent. The divergence of views concerning the proper observance of Sunday promoted general disregard of the day. Dissenters of different sects knew little of toleration, less of fraternity; and while signal examples of piety and learning were found in the Established Church and among the older sects, cant and formality characterized the majority. Controversy could be enkindled in a moment, speedily became tinged with bitterness, and hurried on to violence. The greatest extremes of doctrine, discipline, and ritual were advocated with vehemence, while to gain a temporary ascendancy apparently destructive compromises were made, only to smother temporarily the flames

<sup>1</sup> "Student's Hume" (London, John Murray, 1862).

which raged beneath. The spiritually minded and all of keen sensibility deplored the condition of social and ecclesiastical morals.

The connection between public and private morality is so intimate that it is a safe generalization that neither exists long alone. As respects many external things the reformation had been considerable; but as regards the purpose for which Christianity was founded, and to which forms and discipline are but means, and in all but a few essentials subordinate, it was superficial.

## CHAPTER II.

### PROGENITORS OF THE FOUNDER.

ONE of the most recent lives of Wesley<sup>1</sup> represents that he "was of gentle birth on both sides. The Wesleys were an ancient family settled in the west of England from the time of the Conquest. The Annesleys, his mother's family, were an equally ancient and respected stock."

George J. Stevenson,<sup>2</sup> M.A., of London, traces the ancestors of Wesley, through the genealogical table prepared about a century ago by the descendants of the Earl of Mornington, in both England and Ireland, to a very early period, under the three names of Wesley, Westley, and Wellesley; identifying one branch of the family down to Arthur, Duke of Wellington, and another to Herbert, the only son of Walter Wesley, who received the honor of knighthood and was contemporary with Queen Elizabeth. He wedded Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Wesley, of Dangan Castle, Ireland, by which the English and Irish branches of the family were reunited. To them were born three sons: William, heir of the estates and contemporary with James I.; Harphame, who died unmarried; and Bartholomew, who was ordained a priest.

Concerning this genealogical tree the Epworth Wesleys do not appear to have known or cared much, for John Wesley declared when in middle life that all he or his fam-

<sup>1</sup> "John Wesley," by J. H. Overton, rector of Epworth.

<sup>2</sup> "The Wesley Family."

ily knew of their ancestry went no further back " than a letter which his grandfather's father had written to her he was to marry." That letter was dated 1619, so that Bartholomew Wesley was then single. Following John Wesley and his father, Samuel, most biographers begin with Bartholomew Wesley. Thus Southey (chapter i., American edition) says: " The founder of Methodism was emphatically of a good family, in the sense in which he himself would have used the term." Whitehead and Coke begin at the same point; " The Life and Times of Samuel Wesley " represents Bartholomew Wesley as born about the year 1600; Stevenson puts it in the year 1595; and all accounts agree that he was born in Dorsetshire.

A comparison of dates makes clear that Puritanism was rapidly spreading in the national church during the period of the childhood and youth of Bartholomew Wesley, who was educated at the University of Oxford, where he pursued the study of physic and divinity. The maiden to whom was written the letter of which John Wesley speaks was the daughter of Sir Henry Colley, of Kildare, Ireland. Little is told of his family or personal history after his marriage until 1640, when he was installed rector of Catherston, in his native county. He was born in the last days of the reign of Elizabeth, and before his installation passed through the reigns of James I. and Charles I., being about thirty years of age when the latter ascended the throne. The political and ecclesiastical subjects discussed and the state of his mind during the formative period can easily be inferred from contemporary history.

Ten years after his induction into the rectory of Catherston that of Charmouth was added, the two villages being about a mile apart. The trial and judicial beheading of Charles I. took place while he was in his prime, and he held these rectories during all the wars of the Common-

wealth, the career of Oliver Cromwell as Protector, the brief period during which his son Richard reigned, and the first two years of the reign of Charles II., when, being strenuously opposed to the latter's dissolute life, perfidious character, and popish tendencies, he was one of the two thousand ministers ejected in 1662 under the Act of Uniformity.

Bartholomew Wesley continued to live in Charmouth for many years, preaching when he could, and administering medicine when occasion demanded. Throughout that western region dissenting Christians were persecuted in every possible way and were compelled to worship God secretly. In 1664 one of his neighbors wrote of him: "This Wesley of Charmouth, now a nonconformist, lives by the practice of physic in that place." In a book published the same year the author calls Wesley "the puny parson of the place, and a most devoted friend to the parricides." Concerning this epithet Stevenson remarks: "All the Wesleys for three hundred years were of small stature, ranging from five feet four to five feet six inches."

Bartholomew Wesley had but one son, John, born in Devonshire in 1636. Like his father, he was educated at Oxford, where his proficiency was marked; and at the age of twenty-two he had taken his degree of master of arts. Dr. John Owen, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, was vice-chancellor at the university, and, observing that John Wesley was of a serious turn and attentive to his studies, gave him sympathy and assistance. Proficient in every department, he applied himself especially to the study of the oriental languages. It is probable that he was at Oxford during the entire time of Dr. Owen's administration. Oxford had suffered much from a long siege, and was compared to Jerusalem in ruins. Colleges had been turned into barracks, and halls into granaries.

“There was little or no education of youth; poverty, desolation, and plunder—the sad effects of war—were to be seen in every corner.” The most learned men among the Puritans were then there, and among the students were William Penn, Dr. South, Sir Christopher Wren, and Whitby the commentator.

Previous to his induction into the ministry John Wesley was obliged to pass an examination before Oliver Cromwell's triers, was installed four months before Cromwell died, and married the daughter of John White, one of the members of the Westminster Assembly. During the civil war he took up the sword for the party represented by a Committee of Safety based upon seven principles: that there should be no king, and no single person as chief magistrate; the army should be continued; there should be no imposition upon conscience, no house of peers; that the legislative and executive powers should be in distinct hands; and that Parliament should be elected by the people. When the wars were over and Charles ascended the throne in 1660, John Wesley submitted, taking the oath of allegiance.

He was, however, brought before the Bishop of Bristol on a charge that he would not read the liturgy. Their dialogue occupies six pages of Tyerman's “Life of Wesley,” and the similarity between the terseness of the founder of Methodism and that of his grandfather is extraordinary.

“‘What is your name?’

“‘John Wesley.’

“‘By whom were you ordained, or are you ordained?’

“‘I am sent to preach the gospel.’

“‘By whom were you sent?’

“‘By a church of Jesus Christ.’

“‘What church is that?’

“‘The church of Christ at Melcombe.’



“ ‘That factious and heretical church?’

“ ‘May it please you, sir, I know of no faction or heresy that that church is guilty of. . . .’

“ ‘Did you not ride with your sword in the time of the Committee of Safety, and engage with them?’

“ ‘Whatever imprudence in civil matters you may be informed I am guilty of, I shall crave leave to acquaint your lordship that his Majesty having pardoned them fully, and I having suffered on account of them since the pardon, I shall put in no other plea, and waive any other answer. . . .’

“ ‘They would approve any that would come to them and close with them. I know they approved those who could not read twelve lines of English.’

“ ‘All that they did I know not; but I was examined touching gifts and graces.’

“ ‘I question not your gifts, Mr. Wesley. I will do you any good I can; but you will not long be suffered to preach unless you do it according to order.’

“ ‘I shall submit to any trial you shall please to make. I shall present your lordship with a confession of my faith, or take what other way you please to insist on.’

“ ‘No; we are not come to that yet.’

“ ‘I shall desire several things may be laid together, which I look on as justifying my preaching: (1) I was devoted to the service from my infancy. (2) I was educated thereto, at school and in the university.’

“ ‘What university were you of?’

“ ‘Oxon.’

“ ‘What house?’

“ ‘New Inn Hall.’

“ ‘What age are you?’

“ ‘Twenty-five.’

“ ‘No, sure, you are not!’

“(3) As a son of the prophets, after I had taken my degrees, I preached in the country, being approved of by judicious, able Christians, ministers and others. (4) It pleased God to seal my labor with success, in the apparent conversion of several souls.’”

This examination shows that John Wesley had not been episcopally ordained; that he was a man of gifts; was set apart by the church; that he set aside the liturgy; that he was a man of courage; that, like Paul before Agrippa, he made upon his judge a favorable impression as to his sincerity, piety, and usefulness; and that the bishop was disposed to be fair-minded.

This was not the end of his troubles. Toward the close of the year the Convocation revised the Prayer-book, and in August, 1662, the use of it was made binding. There were acts by which John Wesley might have been expelled, but for reasons not ascertained his opponents in the parish took other means of securing his ejection. Two years after Charles II. was restored Mr. Wesley was committed to jail on the charge of refusing to use the Prayer-book. It was a superstitious age, and after Wesley had been in prison for some time, Sir Girard Napper, who had been the most forward in committing him, broke his collar-bone, and fearing that this might be a judgment for his cruelty to the minister, he took measures to have him bailed. The privy council finally ordered that he should be discharged, provided he would take the oaths of supremacy and allegiance. For that purpose he was brought before a magistrate, who for some reason unknown refused to administer the oaths, and issued a warrant commanding him to appear before the judges at the next assize, two days later.

He could make little preparation, but a solicitor appeared for him. In his diary there is an account of his examina-

tion and an ascription of praise to God because the aforesaid solicitor pleaded for him, "and the judge, though a man of sharp temper, spoke not an angry word." After an explanation as to why he was not ready, and inquiries by the Bishop of Bristol concerning his former examination, he was questioned as to his legal right to preach.

While the judge was consulting the Act another case was called, and John Wesley was bound over to the next term. He continued to preach until just before he was expelled from church and rectory, with a multitude of others, after the Act of Uniformity. He then delivered a farewell sermon from Acts xx. 32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace."

Although John Wesley was the father of a numerous family, for more than a century the names of but two children were known; recently the names of five and the dates of the birth of the first four have been ascertained, Samuel being the fourth, born December 16, 1662. As the Act of Uniformity went into effect on the 24th of August, Samuel Wesley was born four months after his parents were made homeless, and when he was but nine weeks old they removed to Melcombe; but Sir Girard Napper and seven other magistrates had control, and induced the corporation to make an order against their settlement in the town. To enforce this a fine of two pounds was to be levied upon the owner of any house in which they might be permitted to live, and five shillings per week upon themselves. Driven out by these violent proceedings, he and his family became wanderers, going from place to place, "in all of which the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists treated him with great kindness, and where he preached almost every day."<sup>1</sup>

Joseph Alleine, author of that awakening and judicious

<sup>1</sup> Tyerman's "Life and Times of Samuel Wesley, M.A."

work, "An Alarm to Unawakened Sinners," which appeared in 1672 and is republished to this day, was imprisoned, in the heat of the hottest summer, with fifty Quakers, seventeen Baptists, and thirteen other ministers, in one room, "the ceiling so low that at night, when lying on their mattresses, the prisoners could touch the glowing tiles;" and John Wesley narrowly escaped the same fate.

A friend at length offered him a house in Preston rent free, where he dwelt, with the exception of a brief absence, until his death.

While residing at Preston he endeavored to preach regularly; but owing to the Oxford Five Mile Act, though very prudent, he was often disturbed and four times imprisoned, once for three months and once for half a year. According to Stevenson he died in Preston, and is said to have been secretly buried by night, as the Royalist party, then in power, refused his body a place in the churchyard where he had so long ministered. The general belief is that he was forty-two years of age; but from Dr. Callamy's description, written about 1703, he died "when he had not been much longer an inhabitant here below than his blessed Master was." Accepting the latter assumption, his son Samuel was sixteen years of age when his father died. His widow survived him more than thirty years.

Bartholomew Wesley was still living, but, as Southey remarks, "the loss of this his only son brought his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave."<sup>1</sup>

Samuel Wesley's mother, the wife of John, was the youngest daughter of John White, a Puritan divine of great learning, a perpetual fellow of New College, Oxford, and a frequent preacher there. He was prosecuted in 1630 by Archbishop Laud for preaching against Arminianism and the ceremonies of the Established Church; thirteen years

<sup>1</sup> Southey, vol. i., p. 54, American edition.

afterward he was chosen one of the Westminster Assembly, of which he was one of the three assessors, and was for many years rector of Trinity Church, Dorchester. In 1624 he and some of his friends projected the new colony of Massachusetts in New England, and, after surmounting numerous obstacles, secured a patent. The object was to provide an asylum for the persecuted fugitives who were not able to conform to the ceremonies and discipline of the Church of England. In defense of the project he wrote "The Planter's Plea," published in London in 1630, a work of the highest authority, referred to at length in the Massachusetts Historical Society's collections and Young's "Chronicle of Massachusetts." Dorchester, Mass., was given its name from the fact that this John White was rector of Trinity Church in Dorchester, England. Some writers represent him as having arrived there with the colony, but Edward Everett, in his "Dorchester in 1630, 1776, and 1855,"<sup>1</sup> writes: "Like Robinson in reference to Plymouth, John White never set foot upon the soil of Massachusetts, but he was the most efficient promoter of the undertaking which resulted in the settlement not merely of our ancient town, but of the colony."

He suffered in the civil wars, his house being robbed by a cavalry company under the command of Prince Rupert, who, doubtless thinking to paralyze him, stole his library. His daughter, the mother of John Wesley, was also the niece of the famous Dr. Thomas Fuller, who describes the Rev. John White as "grave without being morose," and as having "in the course of his long ministry expounded the Scriptures all over and half through again, and was so much beloved by his people that he could wind them up to what height he pleased."

In view of the honest poverty of his father, it is not re-

<sup>1</sup> Everett's "Orations and Speeches," vol. iii., p. 306, edition of 1858.

markable that Samuel Wesley's early education was obtained at the free school in Dorchester. He remembered his master, Mr. Henry Dolling, with such respect that to him was dedicated his first book. Here he continued until he was fifteen, when he was sent to school in London, arriving the year that the popish plot of Titus Oates was exposed. Oates had been one of Cromwell's chaplains, then took orders in the Church of England, was twice convicted of perjury while still holding his office, became chaplain on board a man-of-war, but was dismissed for various iniquities, and went into the service of the Duke of Norfolk, who was a Roman Catholic, became one himself, and entered a Jesuit college in Spain, was expelled, and afterward cast out of a similar college in France, and finally returned to England thoroughly disgraced. He then professed to reveal a frightful plot, said to have been concocted by the procurement of the pope, to murder the king and his brother James, the Duke of York.

Awful events followed. Godfrey, who took Oates's depositions, was murdered. He was esteemed a Protestant martyr, and followed to the grave by a long procession headed by seventy Protestant clergymen in full canonicals. Oates was summoned before Parliament. All classes of Protestants felt their lives to be in danger. Leading Roman Catholics were committed to the Tower, and ordinary prisons filled with them. Men of that faith were expelled from their seats in both houses of Parliament, and a number executed.

A reaction, however, took place. Oates was whipped through the streets of London, thrown into prison for a season, brought out again, and it is claimed by an eye-witness who counted them that he "received seventeen hundred stripes in one day." When set free he resumed the place which he had held among the Baptists, who were

obliged to reject him. Meanwhile wars were raging in Scotland. A few years later Lord Russell was executed and Algernon Sidney was condemned on Tower Hill.

Samuel Wesley was in London at this time and witnessed all these scenes. He pursued his studies first in a grammar-school, then in the academy at Stepney. In the former he advanced so rapidly that the master desired to send him direct to the university, and promised him support; but a certain dissenting congregation, out of respect for his father, offered him thirty pounds a year if he would go to the academy of the Rev. Edward Veal, who had studied at Christ Church College, Oxford, and Trinity College, Dublin, and bore the highest reputation for learning and piety. Here he remained two years, so progressing as to receive an additional bonus of ten pounds per annum. The school was broken up by the persecutions of the neighboring magistrates, and he went to an academy at Newington Green, taught by Charles Morton, who was also persecuted, and while Samuel Wesley was a student there was obliged to leave the school and conceal himself. Removing to this country, he became vice-president of Harvard College.

Samuel Wesley long afterward thus extolled him: "Mr. Morton was an ingenious and universally learned man; but his chief excellency lay in mathematics. He had many gentlemen of estate, who paid him well; but he thought more of the glory of God than of his private profit."

The students of that school had a mortal antipathy to the Episcopal order, and justified the doctrines that had led to the judicial killing of Charles I. Many of them were opposed to the monarchy, and those "who composed the bitterest and most ill-mannered sarcasms on the public prayers and liturgy of the church were caressed, hugged, encouraged, and commended by the heads of the

dissenting party, Wesley himself sharing in the applause awarded."<sup>1</sup>

It was at this period that he wrote numerous lampoons, principally directed against the clergy of the Church of England and its dignitaries, some of which were scurrilous. His first book was entitled "Maggots," and several of the poems are low in thought and expression, though all display marked talents.

Years afterward Samuel Wesley, while highly commending Mr. Morton for cautioning the students against writing scandalous libels, says that "some of the gravest, oldest, and most learned of dissenting ministers encouraged and pushed him on in his silly lampoons both on church and state, gave him subjects, and furnished him with matter."

While in London Samuel Wesley had the opportunity of hearing Isaac Barrow, John Bunyan, and Stephen Charnock, and others of similar rank; and before he left London for the university "had taken down hundreds of their sermons."<sup>2</sup>

In August, 1680, possessing but forty-five shillings, he walked from London to Oxford, and entered himself as a student in Exeter College. The entries in his own handwriting spell the name Westley. The evidence of energy and determination of character afforded by this step is conclusive. He had no friends upon whom he could rely. His mother, after years of persecution and suffering, had been left penniless, and was now aged and helpless. The same year, before starting for Exeter, he left the dissenters and lost their friendship. His own reasons are thus given by his son, John Wesley: "Some severe invectives being written against the dissenters, Mr. Samuel Wesley,

<sup>1</sup> Tyerman's "Life and Times of Samuel Wesley," p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.



being a young man of considerable talents, was pitched upon to answer them. This set him on a course of reading, which soon produced an effect different from what had been intended. Instead of writing the wished-for answer he himself conceived he saw reason to change his opinions, and actually formed a resolution to renounce the dissenters and attach himself to the Established Church."

He resided at that time with his mother and an aged aunt, both of whom were too strongly attached to the dissenting doctrines to bear with any patience the disclosure of his change of views. He therefore arose one morning before daybreak, and, without acquainting any one with his purpose, set out for Oxford, to enter Exeter College; subsequently he implored the divine direction, "examined things over and over as calmly and impassionately as possible, and, speaking of himself, writes: "The mist cleared up, things appeared in another sort of light than I had seen them in all my life before." He gives a minute account of the processes which led him to go to Oxford—an act equivalent to a final renunciation of the dissenters.

His admission was at the lowest point. He was a *pauper scholaris*, and was obliged to pay fees, purchasing clothes and fuel by working in various ways. He remained five years at Oxford, and finished his studies without debt; having earned money by his writings and by assisting other students not so far advanced or who were indolent, he had saved seven pounds and fifteen shillings. Notwithstanding his labors as servitor and coacher, he was so well prepared for his examinations as to be created Bachelor of Arts, and enjoyed the distinction of being the only student of Exeter College who during that year successfully passed. Though not especially religious, he did considerable benevolent work in visiting prisons.

While he was in the university Charles II. died and

James II. succeeded him. The conflicts resulting from the king's despotic conduct, and his determination to reëstablish the Roman Catholic religion, culminated, so far as Oxford University was concerned, when he commanded the fellows of Magdalen to elect Dr. Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, president of this college—a man who had been a Puritan preacher under Cromwell, a bigoted High-churchman under the Restoration, and now was ready to promote the schemes of James II. and become a papist. Parker wrote many books in a strain of contempt and fury against all dissenters, and exalted the king's authority in matters of religion to such an extent as to become blasphemous, condemning the ordinary assertion that the king was under God and under Christ as “a crude and profane expression,” saying that “the king was indeed under God; he was not under Christ, but above him.”<sup>1</sup> The fellows refused; whereupon James II. came to Oxford and summoned them into his presence. Samuel Wesley was there, and heard him cry: “You have not dealt with me like gentlemen. You have been unmannerly as well as undutiful. Is this your Church of England loyalty? . . . Go home!—get you gone! I am king! I will be obeyed! Go to your chapel this instant and admit the Bishop of Oxford!” As they would not obey they were expelled, and by a mixture of force and fraud the king succeeded in accomplishing his purpose. Parker died in a few months, as he had lived, “a drunkard and a miser, unlamented and even despised by all good men.”

Though disgusted by the evidences that the king was a tyrant, and determined to give him no support, a few months afterward, when the Prince of Wales was born, Samuel Wesley wrote a poem in honor of the king and of the prince. But in one year after the scene at Magdalen

<sup>1</sup> “Burnet's History of His Own Time,” p. 443, Bohn edition.

came the ignominious flight to France of James II. and the entry of William, Prince of Orange.

It was in the midst of the revolution that Samuel Wesley left the university, afterward taking M.A. both at Oxford and Cambridge. He was ordained deacon, August 7, 1688, by Thomas Spratt, Bishop of Rochester; and on the 24th of February, 1689, was ordained priest by Dr. Compton, Bishop of London. It was to him a pleasant coincidence that both these prelates were at Oxford with his father. The church in which these services were held is believed to be St. Andrew, Holborn.

These were trying times, for twelve days before Samuel Wesley was ordained a priest Parliament declared William and Mary king and queen. In the Church of England were Stillingfleet; Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury; Ken, the author of "Morning and Evening Hymns"; South, in some respects the ablest intellect the church has ever had in England; Burnet; Beveridge, the oriental scholar; and Whitby, the commentator. Among the dissenters were such men as Daniel Williams, successor of Baxter, and without an equal among the Presbyterians of the time, and Matthew Henry, the expositor. Jonathan Swift, Dryden, and John Locke were writing, and Isaac Newton pursuing his discoveries.

The first gift of the church to Samuel Wesley was a curacy with an income of twenty-eight pounds per annum. For a few months he held the desirable position of naval chaplain, with a stipend, high for those times, of seventy pounds. This he resigned for another curacy at thirty pounds a year, and with his pen he earned thirty pounds additional.

Considering himself now justified in marriage, he sought as his bride Susannah, the youngest daughter and twenty-fifth child of Dr. Samuel Annesley.

Dr. Annesley was born in the year the Pilgrims sailed from Holland for the New World. Left fatherless at the age of four years, he was trained by his devout mother, and when only six years old he disclosed his intention to be a minister, and soon afterward determined to read twenty chapters of the Bible each day so long as he lived, from which habit he did not depart. He was graduated from Oxford, and from that institution received the degree of LL.D. When he was twenty-four he became a chaplain in the navy, and at twenty-eight preached the Fast-day sermon before the House of Commons. In 1652 he became minister of the Church of St. John the Apostle, in London. As his popularity increased honors were rained upon him, and in 1658 he ministered to two of the largest congregations in the city, the living of one of which yielded him seven hundred pounds.

He was, however, one of the two thousand ministers ejected by the Act of Uniformity, and endured much persecution. In 1672, "when for the sake of the papists King Charles unconstitutionally suspended for a time the penal laws in matters of religion," Dr. Annesley leased a meeting-house and gathered a large church, of which he remained pastor until his death, December 31, 1696, at the end of fifty-five years in the ministry.

In that meeting-house, in 1694, was ordained the renowned Edmund Calamy, an event of unusual historical importance, as it was the first ordination that the dissenters had been allowed to solemnize publicly for above thirty years.

Tyerman's "Life and Times of Samuel Wesley" records a number of interesting facts in the career of Dr. Annesley, and incidents revealing his characteristics. In Williams's "Biography" it is stated that he was able to endure the coldest weather without hat, gloves, or fire; for years he

drank nothing but water, and until his death could read without glasses the smallest print. In spirit and action he seems to have been an antetype of the true Methodist. For the last thirty years of his life he rejoiced in an uninterrupted assurance of God's forgiving love. Daniel Defoe, the author of "Robinson Crusoe," was one of his congregation, and wrote an elegy, which is, in fact, a comprehensive biography. In part it is:

His pious course with childhood he began,  
 And was his Maker's sooner than his own;  
 The heavenly book he made his only school—  
 In youth his study, and in age his rule.  
 A Moses for humility and zeal,  
 For innocence a true Nathanael;  
 Faithful as Abraham or the truer spies,  
 No man more honest and but few so wise.  
 Humility was his darling grace,  
 And honesty sat regent in his face.  
 A heavenly patience did his mind possess—  
 Cheerful in pain, and thankful in distress.

Dr. Annesley wedded the daughter of John White, who was a lawyer by profession, a Puritan in principles, a member of the House of Commons, chairman of the Committee for Religion, a member of the Westminster Assembly, and a radical. He delivered a speech in the House of Commons in 1641, in which he contended "that the office of bishop and presbyter is the same; and that the offices of deacons, chancellors, vicars, surrogates, are all of human origin, and ought to be abolished, as being altogether superfluous and of no service to the church." In this speech he admits that some of the bishops were personally correct, but declares "that the bishops who are good men are all bad bishops," from which he infers "that the very office is itself a curse."

In his function as chairman of the Committee for Religion he presided at the investigation of charges against

pastors, and in 1643 published a book containing one hundred examples of scandalous clergy, the title of which is "The First Century of Scandalous, Malignant Priests." This can be consulted by visitors to the British Museum, in a volume given by George III.

Mr. White was distinguished for intellectual strength. His ecclesiastical opponents agreed with Lord Clarendon in acknowledging that "he was a grave lawyer," but considered that he was so notoriously disaffected toward the church that party feeling blinded him. His quaint epitaph in the Temple Church reads:

Here lieth a John—a burning, shining light.  
His name, life, actions, were all White.

It is an interesting coincidence that the father of Samuel Wesley's mother was John White, eminent, and a member of the Westminster Assembly, and that the father of Susannah Wesley's mother was another John White, also distinguished, and a member of the Westminster Assembly.

Concerning the number of Dr. Annesley's children there is a curious anecdote, authenticated by Dr. Calamy and related by Dunton, with respect to the birth of Susannah. "How many children has Dr. Annesley?" "I believe it is two dozen, or a quarter of a hundred." George James Stevenson says: "For many years it was hard to determine which number was correct, but recent research has proved that both are; she was her father's twenty-fifth child, but she was the twenty-fourth child of her mother, Dr. Annesley's second wife.

Susannah Wesley possessed extraordinary ability and decision of character. Non-Methodist authorities, such as Southey, speak of her as "an admirable woman, of highly improved mind and a strong and masculine understanding, an obedient wife, an exemplary mother, and a fervent

Christian." Her intellectuality and determination were displayed in the fact that, like her father and her husband, "in early youth she had chosen her path."

Much has been said justly in commendation of her, but sometimes unadvisedly, to the expressed or implied disparagement of her husband. "She examined the controversy between the dissenters and the Church of England, and satisfied herself that the dissenters were in the wrong, thus condemning her own father and grandfather." Richard Watson, in his "Life of John Wesley," remarks: "Great as were her natural and acquired talents, she must, at the age of thirteen years, have been a very imperfect judge." It is not, however, known so generally that she went much further, and reasoned herself out of evangelical Christianity into Socinianism; but from this she was reclaimed by the vigorous arguments and sound learning of her husband.

It is difficult to ascertain the extent and details of her mental training. Dr. Adam Clarke, who, through his acquaintance with John Wesley, enjoyed peculiar opportunities of ascertaining the facts, says that she appears to have had the advantage of a liberal education so far as Latin, Greek, and French enter into it. Abundant proofs exist of a thoroughly disciplined mind, extraordinary penetration, accurate knowledge on every current subject, remarkable facility in theological discussions, and excellent style as a writer. Her letters compare favorably with those of the wisest and best women in all ages, and many of them might be attributed to the wisest and best of men without discrediting their just reputation.

Her system of domestic training has elicited the admiration of all. A fact having an important bearing upon subsequent events is that Samuel Wesley's wife was throughout life a "Jacobite High-church woman, whose ecclesiastical

creed was a matter of passionate sentiment and affection, and was cherished as warmly under Low-church William as during Queen Anne's High-church régime."<sup>1</sup>

She believed in the divine right of kings, and in the headship of the legitimate king over the Church of England. The use of the word "Jacobite" arose from the primary manifestation of the spirit in connection with James II., who was compelled to abdicate—Jacob being the Latin form of James.

Adam Clarke says that he had from the lips of John Wesley this anecdote: "Were I," said John Wesley, "to write my own life, I should begin it before I was born, merely for the purpose of mentioning a disagreement between my father and mother. Said my father to my mother one day after family prayer, 'Why did you not say "Amen" this morning to the prayer for the king?' 'Because,' said she, 'I do not believe the Prince of Orange to be the king.' 'If that be the case,' said he, 'you and I must part; for if we have two kings we must have two beds.' My mother was inflexible. My father went immediately to his study, and after a season by himself set out for London, where, being Convocation-man for the diocese of Lincoln, he remained without visiting his own house for the remainder of the year. On March 8th, in the following year (1702) King William died, and as both my father and mother were agreed as to the legitimacy of Queen Anne's title, the cause of disagreement ceased. My father returned to Epworth, and conjugal harmony was restored."

Mr. Tyerman undertakes to show that the portion of this strange story which reflects so severely on Samuel Wesley cannot be true. They had lived together a dozen years

<sup>1</sup> "The Churchmanship of John Wesley," by James H. Rigg, D.D. (London, Wesleyan Conference Office).



since William and Mary's accession, and every Sunday and Friday Samuel Wesley had prayed for King William. Quoting a beautiful passage from a letter of the father to his son Samuel, he shows how deeply they loved each other: "Reverence and love your mother. Though I should be jealous of any other rival in your breast, yet I will not be of her; the more duty you pay her, and the more frequently and kindly you write to her, the more you will please your father." Tyerman assumes the absolute improbability of such a story, and, entering into details, proves that Convocation was summoned twice in the year 1701: first, February 10th and lasted till June 24th, when it was prorogued; convened again December 31st; and between nine and ten weeks after, when King William died, March 8, 1702, it was again prorogued. Further, on the 14th and 18th of May of that same year he finds that Samuel Wesley was at Epworth attending his wife with affectionate tenderness when she became the mother of twins. He adduces letters written by Samuel Wesley from Epworth to Archbishop Sharpe at that time, and thus, as well as in other ways, furnishes satisfactory proof that he was not away from his family or charge for a longer period than ten or twelve weeks.

This incident, doubtless, has a foundation of truth as respects a temporary disagreement, though the extent of it is exaggerated. That its cause was a question of judgment and conscience, indicates the strength of will which characterized the parents of Wesley, and the influence of ecclesiastical and civil ideas upon their characters and actions.

An examination of Mrs. Wesley's letters, and a comparison of English and American writers, justifies Isaac Taylor's estimate: "The Wesleys' mother was the mother of Methodism in a religious and moral sense; for her cour-

age, her submissiveness to authority, the high tone of her mind, its independence and its self-control, the warmth of her devotional feelings and the practical direction given to them, came up and were visibly repeated in the character and conduct of her sons.

“When Mrs. Wesley, writing to her husband concerning the irregular services she had carried on during his absence in the rectory kitchen for the benefit of her poor neighbors, said, ‘Do not advise, but command me to desist,’ she was bringing to its place a corner-stone of the future Methodism. In this emphatic expression of a deep compound feeling—a powerful conscientious impulse and a fixed principle of submission to rightful authority—there was condensed the very law of her son’s course as the founder and legislator of a sect.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Wesley and Methodism,” by Isaac Taylor (American edition, Harper Brothers, 1860).

## CHAPTER III.

### THE MAN OF PROVIDENCE.

SAMUEL and Susannah Wesley were the parents of nineteen children; but when the Epworth rectory was burned in February, 1709, the parochial registers were lost, including the record of the births of their children. George James Stevenson states that after years of research eighteen out of the nineteen have been found, the years and in most cases the months of their births and the months and years of their deaths authenticated. The first was Samuel, who became an important personage; the tenth was John, who died in the year of his birth; the eleventh was Benjamin, who also died in his natal year. The fifteenth was John Benjamin, and the eighteenth, Charles. It was the love of their mother for John and Benjamin, who died so soon, that led her to name the next son, who lived to be baptized for both; but for the reason assigned, no record exists concerning the place of the birth of this child. When a few hours old he was baptized "John Benjamin" by his father at Epworth; but "the second name was never used by the family, although the fact itself is preserved in documents belonging to other relatives."

In the fire which destroyed the registers of the parish of Epworth, John Wesley, then six years old, was imperiled, and his escape is one of the most extraordinary deliverances from imminent death on record. When Samuel Wesley

settled at Epworth the inhabitants of the place generally were given to profligacy, and his denunciations of their sins led "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" to attempt to burn the rectory. Twice they thought they had succeeded, but not till the third effort was their diabolical purpose accomplished. At midnight pieces of burning wood fell on the bed of one of the children and scorched her feet. A cry of fire from the street at that moment aroused Mr. Wesley. Discovering instantly that it was his own house, he awoke his wife, and, taking the eldest girl, burst open the nursery door and called the maid, who was sleeping there with five children. She caught the youngest, bidding the others follow. Three obeyed, but John was not awakened, and in the excitement was overlooked; but when all were thought to be safe he was heard crying in the nursery. His father ran to the stairs, but they would not bear the weight; he fell upon his knees in the hall and commended the soul of the child to God. John, awakened by the light, thought it day, and called to the maid to take him up. As no one came, he opened the curtains, and seeing flames, ran to the door, but, not being able to escape, climbed upon a chest which stood near the window, and was then seen from the yard. No ladder could be obtained, but as the house was low, one man was hoisted upon the shoulders of another, reached the window, and rescued the boy. A moment later the whole roof fell in. The father cried out to neighbors: "Let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children; let the house go, I am rich enough!"<sup>1</sup>

For eleven years John Wesley's chief instructor was his mother, and her system of training was afterward so highly valued by him that in 1732 he induced her, with much

<sup>1</sup> Abridged from the graphic account in Southey's "Life of Wesley."

difficulty, to write a full account of it. Mrs. Wesley said: "It cannot be of any service to any one to know how I, that have lived such a retired life for so many years, used to employ my time and care in bringing up my children. No one can, without renouncing the world in a most literal sense, observe my method; and there are few, if any, that would entirely devote twenty years of the prime of life in hope of saving the souls of their children; for that was my principal intention, however unskillfully managed."<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Wesley's chief principles were these: "At the age of one year each child was taught to fear punishment and to cry softly. Nothing for which it cried was ever to be given to a child, on the ground that to do so would be a recompense for crying, and he would certainly cry again. Children were limited to three meals a day, with nothing between meals. All were to be washed and put to bed at eight o'clock, and on no account was a servant to sit by a child until it fell asleep. As soon as they could speak, all the children were taught the Lord's Prayer, and required to repeat it every morning and every night. Six hours a day were spent at school, but with one exception none were taught to read till five years of age, and then only a single day was allowed for learning the letters of the alphabet, great and small."

The providential preservation of John led his mother to devote special pains to him. In her private meditations, under the head of "Son John," are these words: "I do

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. J. H. Overton, present rector of Epworth, says that after seven years' residence there he can heartily indorse Mrs. Wesley's reluctance. He shows that Epworth is isolated geographically, but still more ecclesiastically, and is cut off from its own proper diocese by the rapid river Trent, often perilous to cross. On one side the parish touches Yorkshire, but is chiefly in Lancashire. There could have been few neighbors with whom the Wesleys could associate on terms of equality. They were always poor, and when John Wesley was but three years old his father was thrown into jail for debt.

intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been, that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of Thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it, sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success!"

From the beginning he would do nothing without reflecting on its fitness and propriety, but argued about everything, so that his father said: "Child, you think to carry everything by dint of argument; but you will find how little is ever done in the world by clear reason." In this particular there is a similarity between the childhood of John Wesley and that of William E. Gladstone, who was also so devout in spirit that his father admitted him to the communion-table when only eight years old. An attack of smallpox when he was between eight and nine intensified John Wesley's religious feeling, developing such patience that his mother wrote to his father that he had borne the disease like a Christian.

In the year 1714 he entered Charterhouse School, in London, where pupils were poorly fed. He suffered special privations, as the older boys had a habit of appropriating the share of animal food distributed to the younger; so that the greater part of the time bread was his only solid food. But his health was excellent, attributed by him in after years to obeying a command of his father "to run round the Charterhouse garden every morning."

According to his own testimony, here he grew less religious; he thinks that he sinned away "that washing of the Holy Ghost which he received in baptism when he was about ten years of age," and remarks concerning his Charterhouse experience that he was negligent of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which, to quote his own language, "I knew to be such,

though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures and said my prayers morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by was (1) not being so bad as other people, (2) having still a kindness for religion, and (3) reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers."

In regard to this Tyerman utters the dictum: "John Wesley entered the Charterhouse a saint, and left it a sinner."

This remark Dr. Rigg characterizes as singularly austere.<sup>1</sup> "That is to say, he entered it a saint of ten years old, and left it a sinner of seventeen. Yet the language which we have quoted from Mr. Wesley," says Dr. Rigg, "was a sentence pronounced, it must be remembered, at a time when all his judgments as to such cases were far more severe than when revised by him after many years of experience." He admits "that he was at this time unconverted there can be no doubt," but believes—and with this an unprejudiced mind must concur—that Mr. Tyerman "uses language which can scarcely fail to convey an altogether exaggerated impression as to the character of his moral and spiritual faults and failings." The Charterhouse School at that time was a collection of youths under comparatively little restraint, full of the spirit of the age, hazing, fighting, drinking when they could; and through that school "John Wesley passed without contracting any taint of vice."

In 1719 he was under the tuition of his brother Samuel, who had become head usher of Westminster School. Samuel was so much pleased with his docility and proficiency as to write to his father: "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar. Jack is a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."

<sup>1</sup> "The Living Wesley," p. 55.

When he was seventeen he entered Christ Church College, Oxford, and there remained for five years, saying his prayers publicly and privately, reading the Scriptures and other religious books, "especially comments on the New Testament;" yet, according to his own testimony, he "had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and, for the most part, very contentedly in some or other known sin." Before the holy communion, which he was required to take three times a year, there were some intermissions and short struggles. His reputation for scholarship was high, and he indulged somewhat in poetry, selections from which, being published after his death in Dr. Whitehead's "Lives of the Wesleys," were not well received, being thought adapted to diminish the reverence in which the name of John Wesley was then held.

His mother, with much discretion, encouraged him to write verses, as this passage from a letter in 1724 shows: "I hope at your leisure you will oblige me with some more verses on any, but rather on a religious, subject." She also told him to make poetry "his diversion, and not his business." His health became impaired, and he was constantly in debt, the occasion for which embarrassment it is not easy to understand, since he received forty pounds per annum from a fund which guaranteed that sum to deserving Charterhouse pupils.

For several years his home letters contain few references to the subject of religion, and he had been four years in Oxford before he expressed a wish to become a minister of Christ.

On consulting his parents, a difference of opinion appeared, and a letter exists, written by his mother, which contains almost the only passage that shows indiscretion in that remarkable woman: "I was much pleased with it



(your letter to your father about taking orders), and liked the proposal well; but it is an unhappiness almost peculiar to our family that your father and I seldom think alike. I approve the disposition of your mind, and I think the sooner you are a deacon the better; because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity. . . . Mr. Wesley differs from me, and would engage you, I believe, in critical learning, which, though incidentally of use, is in no wise preferable to the other." Later his father pressed him to enter into holy orders, and he became a divinity student.

At Oxford he wrote frequently and in the most filial spirit to his parents, and sustained an animated correspondence with his sisters.

One of the first books that John Wesley studied was that attributed to Thomas à Kempis—"The Imitation of Christ," of which he wrote to his mother, who responded dubiously. He was also much impressed by Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying." His father placed a higher estimate upon À Kempis than did his mother, and expressed the opinion that, "making some grains of allowance, he may be read to great advantage; notwithstanding all his superstition and enthusiasm, it is almost impossible to peruse him seriously without admiring, and in some measure imitating, his heroic strains of humility, piety, and devotion." Jeremy Taylor perplexed John Wesley as to the evidence of sins forgiven, and in the course of correspondence with his mother he repudiated the views of Taylor, and settled himself that predestination logically requires the conclusion that God is the author of sin and injustice, expressing the belief that "it is a contradiction to the clearest ideas that we have of the divine nature and perfections." Speaking, many years later, of his spiritual growth, he said: "When I met with it ["The Imitation of Christ"],

the nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before." Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," he declares, led him to resolve to dedicate his life to God, "being thoroughly convinced there was no medium;" and he testifies that he sought these things from that hour. In the order of the development of John Wesley's thought concerning the true Christian life, Jeremy Taylor so changed his views that "The Imitation of Christ," which at first disaffected him, afterward seemed in most respects adapted for a rule of life.

While pursuing these studies Mr. Wesley met a religious friend—it is not known to whom he refers—and his influence united with that of these two great works, in causing him "to begin to alter the whole form of my [his] conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life."

The high respect that Samuel Wesley and his wife felt for each other's intellectual powers cannot be better shown than by two sentences, on the subject of settling the true doctrine of predestination. Mrs. Wesley wrote to her son: "I will tell you my thoughts of the matter; if they satisfy not, you may desire your father's direction, who is surely better qualified for a casuist than I." Whereas, in discussing the principles set forth by Thomas à Kempis, his father wrote to him to consult his mother, for "she has leisure to bould the matter to the bran."

After suitable preparation he was ordained deacon in the autumn of 1725 by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford, who is described as a man of talent and learning, and a High-churchman who spoke kindly of the first Methodists. Wesley referred to him in a sermon written in 1787, thanking Almighty God for the counsel which the bishop had given him, to the effect that if he wished to be extensively useful he must not spend his time in contend-

ing for or against things of a disputable nature, but in testifying against notorious vice, and in promoting essential holiness. He offered himself for a fellowship at Lincoln College, and although he had not become conspicuously strict in his manner of life, yet his religious principles were the subject of satire, and opponents endeavored to make him ridiculous; but owing to his unquestioned scholarship and universally recognized abilities, his brother Samuel's powerful influence, and the friendship of the rector, he was elected fellow in March, 1726, to the delight of his family.

He returned to Oxford and began his work on the 21st of September. He had not yet taken his master's degree, but such were his gifts and attainments that within two months he was elected Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes.

His methods of study after he entered upon his fellowship, as stated by himself, were: Mondays and Tuesdays devoted to Greek and Roman classics, historians, and poets; Wednesdays to logic and ethics; Thursdays to Hebrew and Arabic; Fridays to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturdays to oratory and poetry, chiefly composing; Sundays to divinity. Besides these, he studied French, and entertained himself with experiments in natural science.

He made a study of William Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call," books which taught the necessity of a change of nature, a renunciation of the world and worldly tempers, self-denial, and mortification.

This author was a scholar of renown, a fellow of Emanuel College, Cambridge, and officiated for a time as curate in London, but refused to take the oaths prescribed by the Parliament for the clergy of the Church of England on accession of George I. Obligated on this account to leave

the pulpit, he took a position as tutor of Edward Gibbon, father of the historian. Law was a man of such ability as to affect profoundly the master mind of Samuel Johnson, and produced such an impression upon Macaulay that he expresses surprise that Johnson should have pronounced William Law no reasoner; and, referring to his controversy with Bishop Hoadley, he says that Law "in mere dialectical skill had few superiors. That he was more than once victorious over Hoadley no candid Whig will deny." Gibbon also commends him in the very highest terms, speaking of his "Serious Call" as a masterpiece. "Many of his portraits are not unworthy of the pen of La Bruyère. . . . A philosopher must allow that he exposes with equal severity and truth the strange contradiction between the faith and practice of the Christian world."

Wesley took his degree of Master of Arts February 14, 1727, delivering three orations in Latin—"De Anima Brutorum," "De Julio Cæsare," and "De Amor Dei," which have not been preserved.

He formed a thoroughly ascetic scheme of life, writing to his mother that he had taken leave of leisure and intended to be busy the rest of his life, if God should give him health. Six times a week disputations were held at Lincoln College, and over these John Wesley presided. Though he had been a deeply interested student of logic, he attributes to the discharge of this function much of the power that was so useful in subsequent years. "I have since," said he, "found abundant reason to thank God for giving me this honest art, for by this, when men have held me in by what they call demonstration, I have been able many times to dash them in pieces; and in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay, and it flew open in a moment."

From August, 1727, to November, 1729, he officiated

as his father's curate at Epworth and Wroote. While holding this position he was absent about three months, and on the 22d of September, 1728, was ordained priest at Oxford by Bishop Potter, who had ordained him deacon.

Wesley would undoubtedly have remained many years at Epworth if the rector of Lincoln College, who had rendered so many services to the Wesley family that Samuel Wesley used to say, "I can refuse him nothing," had not written a letter stating that to preserve discipline and good government "it was [at a meeting of the society of Lincoln College], in the opinion of all present, judged necessary that the junior fellows, who should be chosen moderators, shall in person attend the duties of their office, if they do not prevail with some of the fellows to officiate for them." In consequence of this appeal John Wesley returned to Oxford, November 22, 1729, and there remained for six years.

The movement at Oxford to which the term "Methodist" was finally applied began during John Wesley's absence at Epworth, and Charles appears to have been its originator. He attended the weekly sacrament, and induced two other students, Robert Kirkham and William Morgan, to associate with him. Later George Whitefield, James Hervey, and twelve others, whose names are given by most of Wesley's biographers, besides a few who cannot now be ascertained, affiliated with them. The extreme strictness of their conduct excited ridicule; their frankness in rebuking sin developed personal hostility; they were spoken of contemptuously as the "Holy Club," "Bible Bigots," "Bible Moths," the "Godly Club," "Supererogation Men," "Sacramentalists," "Methodists," and, as Mr. Wesley observes in his journal, were "sometimes dignified with the name of 'Enthusiasts' or the 'Reform Club.'" These in 1735 were known as Oxford Methodists. The name "Methodist" appears to have occurred

sporadically in secular history and in earlier Christianity. A sermon preached in 1639 is extant, which refers to certain contemporary "Methodists."

The state of morals in Oxford and elsewhere was lower than it had ever been. The Bishop of Lichfield had said in 1724: "The Lord's day is now the devil's market-day. More lewdness, more drunkenness, more quarrels and murders, more sin, is contrived and committed on this day than on all the other days of the week together. . . . Sin, in general, is grown so hardened and rampant as that immoralities are defended, yea, justified on principle. . . . Every kind of sin has found a writer to teach and vindicate it, and a bookseller and hawker to divulge and spread it." <sup>1</sup>

An exceedingly able work <sup>2</sup> traces the religious and moral life of England from a very early period, showing the rise, principles, and growth of the nonconformist and dissenting sects until just before the rise of Wesleyan Methodism, which, in the opinion of the author, was the darkest period. The Presbyterian congregations suddenly lapsed into Arianism, and the Presbyterian churches founded at the period of the ejection of the two thousand ministers, in 1662, did not exist for more than fifty years. Even where the Presbyterian congregations maintained their orthodoxy their religious life was lamentable. The Baptists and Independents, though not falling into Arianism, lacked leaders, and accomplished but little in checking the general evil tendencies. The author sums up his conclusion in this sentence: "The darkest period in the religious annals of England was that prior to the preaching of Whitefield and the two Wesleys."

<sup>1</sup> Tyerman, vol. i., p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> "The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth," by R. Barclay (London).

It has recently been suggested that the testimonies to the general immorality of that age were of the nature of a fanatical denunciation. This has led two authors of the English church candidly to reconsider the subject; and lest an extravagant conclusion should be adduced from the representation herein made, the result of their investigation is stated:<sup>1</sup> "Throughout the whole of the eighteenth century almost all writers who had occasion to speak of the general condition of society joined in one wail of lament over the irreligion and immorality that they saw all around them. This complaint was far too universal to mean little more than a general and somewhat conventional tirade upon the widespread corruption of human nature." The authors then observe that "even if the severe judgment passed by contemporary writers upon the spiritual and moral condition of their age may be fairly qualified by some such consideration, it must certainly be allowed that religion and morality were, generally speaking, at a lower ebb than they have been at many other periods."

The life of John Wesley was a continual protest against the moral evils and the religious laxity of the time. He observed the Wednesday and Friday fasts, tasting no food till three in the afternoon. He walked twenty-five miles a day in hot weather as well as in cold, and frequently, with his brother, would read as they walked for a distance of ten or twelve miles.

He and his colleagues carried asceticism and devotion to study so far as nearly to ruin their health. He set apart an hour or two every day for prayer, partook of the holy communion weekly, soon became much more devoted, and prayed with intense feeling, visited prisons, gave away all the money he could obtain, cut off not only

<sup>1</sup> "The English Church in the Eighteenth Century," vol. i., by C. J. Abbey and J. H. Overton.

superfluities, but many things deemed by others necessities, until by failing health, and especially by severe and frequent hemorrhages, he was brought to the gates of death.

Naturally they were much opposed. Morgan died prematurely, and Wesley was charged with being the cause of it by recommending excessive fasting. He succeeded, however, in making so plain a statement as to convince the father of Mr. Morgan that he was not blameworthy. Nevertheless Wesley's system at that time was such as, carried fully and logically to its end, would in many instances lead to such a result.

Mr. Morgan, in his weakness, had been afflicted by wandering of the mind, and Samuel Wesley thus refers to him :

Does M—— weakly think his time misspent?  
Of his best actions can he now repent?  
Others, their *sins* with reason just deplore,  
The guilt remaining when the pleasure's o'er;  
Since the foundations of the world were laid,  
Shall he for *virtue* first himself upbraid?  
Shall he, what most men to their sins deny,  
Show pain for alms, remorse for piety?

Can he the sacred Eucharist decline?  
What Clement poisons, here the bread and wine?  
Or does his sad disease possess him whole,  
And taint alike his body and his soul?  
If to renounce his graces he decree,  
Oh, that he would transfer the stock to me!  
Alas! enough what mortal e'er can do  
For Him who made him and redeemed him too?  
Zeal may to man beyond desert be showed;  
No supererogation stands to God.

The condition to which they were reduced is described in graphic manner by John Wesley's physician, John Whitehead, M.D.,<sup>1</sup> and immortalized by a poem written privately

<sup>1</sup> "Lives of the Wesleys" (London, 1793; reprinted in Boston, 1844).



to his brother Charles by Samuel Wesley, after a visit to Oxford, under date of April 20, 1732 :

One or two questions more before I end;  
 They much concern a brother and a friend.  
 Does John seem bent beyond his strength to go,  
 To his frail carcase literally a foe?  
 Lavish of health as if in haste to die,  
 And shorten time t' ensure eternity?

John Wesley's father died on the 25th of April, 1735. He was possessed of great vivacity and wit, of a powerful memory, stored with all gospel learning. He has been represented as of a harsh and stern character; but, says Tyerman, "nothing can be further from the truth than this;" and in proof of the statement quotes Miss Wesley, his granddaughter, as saying: "His children idolized his memory." Commenting upon this, his most elaborate biographer remarks: "They would scarce have done that if he had been ungentle and gruff. It is true he kept his children in the strictest order; but he also evinced the greatest tenderness, and thus secured both the respect and love of his numerous family. To his judicious method of instructing and managing his offspring the Methodists owe an incalculable debt of gratitude."

His personality was impressed upon all his children; in particular upon Samuel and John. As a Christian he was earnest, devout, conscientious. As a parish minister his rule was the utmost fidelity and the utmost self-sacrifice. The testimonies of John Wesley, recorded in his journal, delivered in his sermons, and written in a letter to his father, constitute a tribute of which few men are worthy. A few months before his death he wrote: "For many years you have diligently fed the flock committed to your care with the sincere milk of the Word. Many of them

the Great Shepherd has, by your hand, delivered from the hand of the destroyer, some of whom have already entered into peace, and some remain unto this day. For myself, I doubt not but when your warfare is accomplished you will go to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a ripe shock of grain, full of years and of victories."

He recorded in his journal several years later these words concerning a visit to Epworth: "But let no one think his labor of life is lost because the fruit does not immediately appear. Near forty years did my father labor here, and he saw little fruit of all his labor. I took some pains among this people too, and my strength also seemed spent in vain; but now the fruit appeared."

Dr. John Burton, of Oxford, shortly after this event took great interest in the colonization of Georgia, and urged John Wesley to become a missionary. The origin of that commonwealth was equally romantic and philanthropic. The original proposition was to plant a new colony south of Carolina to be tilled by British and Irish laborers, "without the dangerous help of blackamoors." In those days men were hanged for thefts, and in Great Britain on the average four thousand men were annually imprisoned for debt. It was possible for a small debt that a man should be condemned to prison for life. This attracted the attention of James Oglethorpe, a member of the British Parliament, educated, vigorous, a brilliant soldier, who in 1728 planned an asylum in America where men would not be reproached or embarrassed on account of previous poverty, and slavery would be unknown.

On the 9th of June, 1732, George II. granted a charter to Oglethorpe and his associates. Parliament promoted the scheme by appropriating ten thousand pounds. Many benevolent persons contributed, and the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts took a deep interest in

it. In November, 1732, Oglethorpe embarked with one hundred and twenty emigrants.

Thus Georgia was settled. Jews were admitted, but Roman Catholics excluded; "the purpose was a place of refuge for the distressed people of Britain and the persecuted Protestants of Europe." On the last day of October, 1733, the persecuted Moravians, being invited by the Society in England for Propagating the Gospel, emigrated to Georgia. Oglethorpe met them at Charleston, and five days later they encamped near Savannah.

Oglethorpe sailed in April, 1734, for England, and during his absence many disturbances arose. Throughout England Georgia was praised in a famous sermon in these words: "Slavery, the misfortune, if not the dishonor, of other plantations, is absolutely proscribed. . . . The name of slavery is here unheard, and every inhabitant is free from unchosen masters and oppression."

The population of Georgia prior to the arrival of John Wesley and his companions had been made up by four companies: the first of Englishmen, the second of Lutherans from Saltzburg in Germany, the third of Scotch Highlanders, and the fourth of Moravians. February 6th a new company, of three hundred emigrants, conducted by Oglethorpe, landed in Georgia; among them certain Moravians, and John and Charles Wesley. John hoped to become not only a missionary to the English, but an apostle to the Indians. Charles was secretary to Oglethorpe.<sup>1</sup>

On the voyage the strictness of Wesley and those who sympathized with him was probably never surpassed. From four to five in the morning they prayed privately; from five till seven they read the Bible together; at seven they breakfasted; at eight had public prayers and expounded the lesson for the day; from nine to twelve John

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft's "History of the United States," vol. iii.

Wesley studied German and Charles wrote sermons; at noon they met for prayer, and at one dined; from dinner until four they read or gave special instruction to those willing to receive it; at four they had evening prayer and expounded the lesson; from five to six they spent in private prayer, and from six to seven each read in his own cabin to three detachments of the English passengers; at seven Wesley joined with the Moravians in their service; at eight they met in private to exhort each other, and between nine and ten retired.

A storm arose, during which the Moravians were so calm and so ready to die that Wesley concluded that he had not the faith which they possessed. The voyage consuming nearly four months, they were unable to effect a landing until February 5, 1736. Upon his arrival in Georgia he encountered a Moravian elder, Spangenberg, who cross-examined him with regard to his religious experience, with the effect of increasing Wesley's doubt of its genuineness.

Wesley was greatly disappointed in not finding a suitable opportunity to preach to the Indians; nor were the colonists generally willing to hear him. Not understanding human nature, he was easily imposed upon, and was betrayed and insulted by those whom he endeavored to benefit. He was unduly severe, unnecessarily provoking resistance; and the people would not endure his High-church views, for he made a matter of conscience of many things not prescribed in the Bible, withal revealing his inmost thoughts to every one; and thus those who became incensed had abundant material to kindle and feed the flame of prejudice against him. Daily he held early and also forenoon services, inculcated fasting of the severest kind, required something scarcely to be distinguished from confession as a preparation for communion, celebrated

the Lord's Supper weekly, refused it to all who had not been baptized, insisted on baptism even of infants by immersion, rebaptized the children of dissenters, and absolutely refused to bury those who had not received episcopal baptism.<sup>1</sup>

Great excitement was produced by his refusing the holy communion to Belzius, one of the most godly men in the colony, the Lutheran pastor of the Saltzburgers. This is the entry on that subject in his unpublished journal: "Sunday, July 17, 1737. I had occasion to make a very unusual trial of the temper of Mr. Belzius, pastor of the Saltzburgers, in which he behaved with such loveliness and meekness as became a disciple of Jesus Christ." In his journal for September 30, 1749, he published a letter from this man, received in the preceding July, and after it writes these words: "What a truly Christian beauty and simplicity breathe in these lines! And yet this very man, when I was at Savannah, did I refuse to admit to the Lord's table because he was not baptized; that is, not baptized by a minister who had been episcopally ordained. Can any one carry High-church zeal higher than this? And how well have I since been beaten with mine own staff!"

Notwithstanding his austerity, he paid attentions, looking toward matrimony, to a young woman not at all suited to him. Whether the engagement was actually formed, and, if so, which broke it, are disputed questions. But subsequent to these attentions, and after she had become Mrs. William Williamson, she did not, in his opinion, always act consistently with a Christian profession, habitually neglecting some of the instructions which Wesley gave to the church. In accordance with his uniform course, after private reproof by letter, on the first Sunday in July, 1737, he rebuked her, and on the first Sunday in August

<sup>1</sup> See Rigg's "The Living Wesley."

repelled her from the holy communion. The next day the recorder of Savannah issued the following warrant:

GEORGIA, SAVANNAH. [SS.]

*“To all constables, tithing-men, and others, whom these may concern:*

“You, and each of you, are hereby required to take the body of John Wesley, clerk;

“And bring him before one of the bailiffs of the said town, to answer the complaint of William Williamson and Sophia his wife, for defaming the said Sophia, and refusing to administer to her the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, in a public congregation, without cause; by which the said William Williamson is damaged one thousand pounds sterling: and for so doing, this is your warrant, certifying what you are to do in the premises. Given under my hand and seal the 8th day of August, Anno Dom. 1737.

“THO. CHRISTIE.”

A grand jury of forty-four members sat upon the case. Of these Mr. Wesley says: “One was a Frenchman who did not understand English, one a Papist, one a professed infidel, three Baptists, sixteen or seventeen others, Dissenters, and several who had personal quarrels against me and had openly vowed revenge.” A majority found the following bill:

“That John Wesley, clerk, had broken the laws of the realm, contrary to the peace of our sovereign lord the king, his crown and dignity:

“1. By speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson, against her husband’s consent.

“2. By repelling her from the holy communion.

“3. By not declaring his adherence to the Church of England.

“ 4. By dividing the Morning service on Sundays.

“ 5. By refusing to baptize Mr. Parker’s child, otherwise than by dipping, except the parents would certify it was weak and not able to bear it.

“ 6. By repelling William Gough from the holy communion.

“ 7. By refusing to read the Burial service over the body of Nathaniel Polhill.

“ 8. By calling himself Ordinary of Savannah.

“ 9. By refusing to receive William Aglionby as a god-father only because he was not a communicant.

“ 10. By refusing Jacob Matthews for the same reason ; and baptizing an Indian trader’s child with only two sponsors.”

Commenting on the tenth specification, Mr. Wesley wrote in his journal: “ This, I own, was wrong ; for I ought, at all hazards, to have refused baptizing it till he had procured a third.”

Twelve of the grand jurors, of whom three were constables and six tithing-men, refused to sign the presentment, giving the following reasons :

“ WHEREAS two presentments have been made, the one of August 23d, the other of August 31st, by the grand jury for the town and county of Savannah, in Georgia, against John Wesley, clerk ;

“ We, whose names are underwritten, being members of the said grand jury, do humbly beg leave to signify our dislike of the said presentments ; being, by many and divers circumstances, thoroughly persuaded in ourselves that the whole charge against Mr. Wesley is an artifice of Mr. Causton’s, designed rather to blacken the character of Mr. Wesley than to free the colony from religious tyranny, as he was pleased, in his charge to us, to term it. But as these circumstances will be too tedious to trouble your

honors with, we shall only beg leave to give the reasons of our dissent from the particular bills.

“With regard to the first bill, we do not apprehend that Mr. Wesley acted against any law by writing or speaking to Mrs. Williamson, since it does not appear to us that the said Mr. Wesley has either spoke in private or wrote to the said Mrs. Williamson since March 12th (the day of her marriage), except one letter of July 5th, which he wrote at the request of her uncle, as a pastor, to exhort and reprove her.

“The second we do not apprehend to be a true bill; because we humbly conceive Mr. Wesley did not assume to himself any authority contrary to law; for we understand, ‘Every person intending to communicate, should signify his name to the curate at least some time the day before;’ which Mrs. Williamson did not do, although Mr. Wesley had often, in full congregation, declared he did insist on a compliance with that rubric, and had before repelled divers persons for non-compliance therewith.

“The third we do not think a true bill; because several of us have been his hearers when he has declared his adherence to the Church of England in a stronger manner than by a formal declaration: by explaining and defending the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds, the Thirty-nine Articles, the whole Book of Common Prayer, and the Homilies of the said church; and because we think a formal declaration is not required but from those who have received institution and induction.

“The fact alleged in the fourth bill we cannot apprehend to be contrary to any law in being.

“The fifth we do not think a true bill; because we conceive Mr. Wesley is justified by the rubric, viz., ‘If they (the parents) certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice



to pour water upon it; 'intimating (as we humbly suppose) it shall not suffice if they do not certify.

"The sixth cannot be a true bill; because the said William Gough, being one of our members, was surprised to hear himself named without his knowledge or privity, and did publicly declare it was no grievance to him, because the said John Wesley had given him reasons with which he was satisfied.

"The seventh we do not apprehend to be a true bill; for Nathaniel Polhill was an Anabaptist, and desired in his lifetime that he might not be interred with the office of the Church of England. And further, we have good reason to believe that Mr. Wesley was at Frederica, or on his return thence, when Polhill was buried.

"As to the eighth bill we are in doubt, as not well knowing the meaning of the word 'Ordinary.' But for the ninth and tenth we think Mr. Wesley is sufficiently justified by the canons of the church, which forbid 'any person to be admitted godfather or godmother to any child before the said person has received the holy communion'; whereas William Aglionby and Jacob Matthews had never certified Mr. Wesley that they had received it."

There was a fatal legal defect in the composition of the grand jury, yet as Mr. Causton, Mrs. Williamson's uncle, was the chief magistrate, it was impossible for Mr. Wesley to secure a trial. He appeared at six or seven courts successively, but in vain; until, convinced that he could not obtain justice, he determined to go back to England, if he could find opportunity to do so, and lay the matter before General Oglethorpe.

The account in his journal of his adventures is as thrilling as narratives of the most celebrated explorers, but not more so than the delineation of his spiritual experiences.

He hoped, however, to return, as his journal for January

22, 1738, contains this entry: "I took my leave of America (though, if it please God, not forever)." So lofty was Wesley's ideal that he considered his mission to Georgia a failure; but when George Whitefield arrived there some months after Wesley returned to England, he found reason to write in his journal: "The good that Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people; and he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake. Oh that I may follow him as he has followed Christ!"

On the voyage Mr. Wesley wrote: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh, who shall convert me? . . . It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I the least of all suspected), that I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God." This is part of a general description of Wesley's spiritual condition as he then estimated it; but many years later he inserted after the words just quoted: "I am not sure of this." At another point where he had expressed doubts as to whether he was a Christian he adds a foot-note: "I had even then the faith of a *servant*, though not of a *son*." And after declaring himself "a child of wrath" he writes this: "I believe not."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's "Works," vol. iii., p. 56, American edition.

## CHAPTER IV.

### GENESIS AND GROWTH OF METHODISM.

LANDING at Deal, England, February 1, 1738, John Wesley hastened to London. That he had made the acquaintance of the Moravians, and acquired the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues so that he could read and speak them, seemed to him a sufficient compensation for all his hardships. On the 4th he preached in the Church of St. John the Evangelist from the text, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," and records: "I was afterward informed that many of the best in the parish were so offended that I was not to preach there any more."

On the 7th of February he met Peter Bohler, and ever after regarded the meeting as a turning-point in his spiritual development. This devout Moravian taught him what faith is and what are its fruits. For some days his conversations with Bohler were frequent; and on the 22d of April the subject of instantaneous conversion was considered, and by the arguments of Bohler, the teachings of the Scriptures, and the testimony of certain witnesses, the eyes of John Wesley were opened to see that such conversion is possible.

Peter Bohler, nine years younger than John Wesley, was a native of Frankfort, Germany, and was educated at the University of Jena, where he afterward studied theology. He became a Moravian at sixteen, and was ordained by Zinzendorf at twenty-five. He was on his way to Carolina when he met Wesley in London. At that time he knew

no English, and Charles Wesley gave him his first lessons. In the Moravian meetings he spoke in Latin, a learned tailor interpreting his addresses.

Bohler, after these conversations, in a letter to Zinzendorf, analyzed John Wesley, stating that he was "a good-natured man, knew he did not properly believe on the Saviour, and was willing to be taught." He affirmed that of faith in Jesus "Wesley had no other idea than the generality of people had. They justify *themselves*, and therefore they always take it for granted that they believe already, and try to prove their faith by their works, and thus so plague and torment themselves that they are at heart very miserable." The "Methodist Magazine" for 1854 contains much of interest on this subject.

Confident of his sincerity, Bohler advised him to "preach faith until he experienced it." On the 7th of May he spoke in two different churches, and in each was informed that he could not be allowed to occupy the pulpit again. On the 9th he was heard with the same result, and this followed wherever he appeared.

During the greater part of this time he was continually sad because he felt under condemnation.

His journal contains an epitome of his religious life, culminating in a spiritual change destined to become the soul of Methodism:

"When I met Peter Bohler again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, namely, Scripture and experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavoring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, 'that experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those Scriptures. Nor could I, there-

fore, allow it to be true, till I found some living witnesses of it.' He replied, he could show me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day. And, accordingly, the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified, of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present, sins. They added with one mouth that this faith was the gift, the free gift, of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced; and by the grace of God I resolved to seek it unto the end: (1) By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon *my own* works or righteousness; on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. (2) By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace continual prayer for this very thing—justifying, saving faith; a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me*; a trust in him as *my* Christ, as *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

“I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indifference, dullness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24th. I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on those words: ‘There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; even that ye should be partakers of the divine nature’ (2 Pet. i. 4). Just as I went out I opened it again on those words: ‘Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.’ In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul’s. The anthem was: ‘Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord; who may abide it? For there is mercy with thee; there-

fore shalt thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.'

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

"I began to pray with all my might for those who had in more especial manner despitely used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, 'This cannot be faith, for where is thy joy?' Then was I taught that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but that, as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsels of his own will."

On the 13th of June, Wesley, with several companions, began a journey to Herrnhut, the chief settlement of the Moravians, by way of Rotterdam and Amsterdam to Cologne, whence they embarked on the Rhine, traveling in a boat drawn by horses four days and nights to Mayence. At Frankfort, not being provided with passports, they were not allowed to enter the city; but, aware that Peter Bohler's father lived there, they sought his interposition and were admitted. Thence they proceeded to the old castle at Ronneburg, the abode of Count Zinzendorf, where they remained two weeks.

While treated with kindness, Wesley was not allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper. The reasons given were these: "First, the congregation saw him to be *homo perturbatus*, and that his head had gained an ascendancy over his heart. Second, they thought that communing with them might interfere with the plan which he had formed of doing good as a clergyman of the English church, which plan they approved."<sup>1</sup>

On the 1st of August Wesley arrived at Herrnhut, about thirty English miles from Dresden, in Upper Lusatia, on the border of Bohemia. This settlement of Moravians had been formed in 1722. "Herrnhut," the name which they gave to it, signifies "the watch of the Lord." By 1727 the settlement had a population of five hundred, and public notice had been attracted to them in England a year or so before the arrival of John Wesley. Count Zinzendorf, who regarded Wesley as a pupil, spent much time in England, and died in Chelsea in 1760.

When Wesley arrived at the settlement there were about a hundred dwellings, an orphan house, and a chapel. Here he heard Christian David, the founder of the settlement, who five years before had guided the first missionaries to Greenland. It was his success—though a mechanic without education, never having seen a Bible until he was twenty years old, and to that time a bigoted Roman Catholic—which prepared Wesley at a later period to estimate at their proper relative value the itinerant evangelist full of zeal and spiritual power, and the student, cold, reserved, dialectical, strong in the letter, but weak in the spirit.

While here, Wesley, though much encouraged, was for a time led into a form of mystical antinomianism, and also confounded the witness of the Spirit with sancti-

<sup>1</sup> Hutton's "Memoirs," quoted by Tyerman.

fication. Yet he soon doubted whether the sentiments of his new friends on certain essential points were Scriptural, and was finally constrained to analyze the views and the personal claims of Count Zinzendorf with a frankness which can hardly be distinguished from severity. A painful controversy distracted the minds of those who at first affiliated. The best statement of the change in Wesley's point of view, as the result of acquaintance with the Moravians, is to be found in "John Wesley," by Julia Wedgwood: "Adherence to the church was no longer the first condition of membership in any society with which he was associated. The birthday of a Christian was already shifted from his baptism to his conversion, and in that change the partition-line of two great systems is crossed."

There had been, in various parts of London and vicinity, certain societies, small assemblies, consisting chiefly of members of the Established Church, who met in private houses, and frequently took their name from the house in which they were held. Such was the one in Aldersgate Street where Wesley had found spiritual rest. On his return from Germany Wesley went to and fro, speaking in these societies wherever he could obtain a hearing, and naturally became the most influential among them.

About this time, George Whitefield, who had been preaching in America, returned and sought a meeting with Wesley. He had already attained an extraordinary reputation, and had begun to speak in the open air. Wesley had difficulty in adapting himself to that method, and in referring to the subject said: "I could scarce reconcile myself to this strange way of preaching in the fields, to which he [Whitefield] set me the example on Sunday, having been all my life till very lately so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should



have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

Wesley's recent return from Georgia contributed greatly to the number of his hearers, of which he took advantage, proclaiming the gospel according to his new views with unparalleled energy and unction. Although not allowed a second time in the churches, the first message was always effective in the illumination of some hearers.

In defending himself for holding services in the open air he says: "Be pleased to observe: (1) That I was forbidden as by a general consent to preach in any church (though not by any judicial sentence) for preaching such doctrine; this was the open, avowed cause; there was at that time no other, either real or pretended, except that the people crowded so. (2) That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air till after this oppression."

For such preaching Charles Wesley was cited to Lambeth and threatened by the Archbishop of Canterbury with excommunication. Though somewhat intimidated, encouraged by Whitefield, he preached the very next Sunday at Moorfields<sup>1</sup> to ten thousand, and at two other points on the same day.

From this time Wesley preached almost incessantly. Every morning he read prayers and preached, reading and expounding the Scriptures also in one or more of the societies every evening; on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday in several contiguous places; on Saturday in the afternoon; on Sunday in the early morning, again at eleven, at two, and at five, traveling many miles between these services. His brother Charles and several others were following a similar order.

<sup>1</sup> A district outside the wall of old London used for recreation. The ground is now occupied by Finsbury Square and adjacent streets.

In England Wesley and Whitefield had not entered into the discussion of doctrinal opinions. But while in the colonies the latter became acquainted with Calvinistic ministers of equal learning and ability, who recommended to him the study of the Puritan divines, with the result that he embraced their doctrines with ardor. He wrote to Wesley upon the subject, who replied opposing the doctrine of election, and also affirming the doctrine of "Christian perfection," teaching that "Christians cannot, indeed, be freed from those perilous weaknesses and follies sometimes improperly termed sins of infirmity, yet that it is the privilege of all to be saved entirely from sin in its proper sense, and from committing it."

The correspondence, while revealing the intensity of the excitement among the people, and the stern earnestness of these godly men, also displays their sincerity and conscientiousness. Whitefield, in a letter to Wesley, says: "The more I examine the writings of the most experienced men, and the experiences of the most established Christians, the more I differ from your opinion about not committing sin, and your denying the doctrines of election and the final perseverance of the saints. . . . God himself teaches my friends the doctrine of election. Sister H—— hath lately been convinced of it; and if I mistake not, dear and honored Mr. Wesley will hereafter be convinced also. Perhaps I may never see you again until we meet in judgment; then, if not before, you will know that sovereign, distinguishing, irresistible grace brought you to heaven."

To this Wesley responded:

"MY DEAR BROTHER: I thank you for yours of May 24th. The case is quite plain. There are bigots both for predestination and against it. God is sending a message to those on either side, but neither will receive it unless

from one who is of their own opinion. Therefore for a time you are suffered to be of one opinion and I of another."

Again Whitefield wrote:

"I know not what you may think, but I do not expect to say indwelling sin is destroyed in me till I bow my head and give up the ghost. . . . Besides, dear sir, what a fine conceit is it to cry up *perfection* and yet cry down the doctrine of *final perseverance!* But this and many other absurdities you will run into because you will not own *election*, and you will not own *election* because you cannot own it without believing the doctrine of *reprobation*. What, then, is there in *reprobation* so horrid? I see no blasphemy in holding that doctrine, if rightly explained. If God might have passed by all, he may pass by some. . . . If you go on thus, honored sir, how can I agree with you? It is impossible. I must speak what I know. By spring you may expect to see

"Ever, ever yours,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."

Finding himself opposed whenever he preached free grace, and the people helplessly divided, Wesley delivered his famous sermon entitled "Free Grace," and published it in a pamphlet of twenty-four pages, annexing a hymn by his brother entitled "Hymn of Universal Redemption."

The circumstances were these which led Wesley to take a public attitude against the doctrine of election: In one of the London societies an advocate persisted in debating it in the meetings held for growth in grace, and Charles Wesley, who was in charge, forbade him to be admitted. When his brother arrived the disputant appeared and demanded if he had been excluded for his opinion. "Which opinion?" asked Wesley. "That of election. I

hold that a certain number are elected from eternity, and they must and shall be saved, and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned." He told Wesley that others in the society so believed, to which Wesley replied that he never questioned their opinions; all he demanded was that they should "only not trouble others by disputing about them." But the contentious brother answered: "No, but I will dispute about them. You are all wrong, and I am determined to set you right." Under these circumstances Wesley replied: "I fear your coming with this view will neither profit you nor us."

The school at Kingswood had, in a certain sense, been founded by Whitefield, who had laid the corner-stone, but immediately left the institution to the management of Wesley, who bought the ground and paid for the building, partly through the contributions of his friends, and partly from the income of his fellowship. He employed John Cennick as teacher, and authorized him to read and expound the Bible to a society which Wesley gathered in the neighborhood.

Cennick, however, publicly attacked in that society the Arminian views of Wesley. He also wrote many letters to Whitefield, and demanded of Wesley that he and his adherents be allowed to retain their membership and have the privilege of "meeting apart." This resulted in a division of the society, fifty adhering to Cennick and ninety to Wesley. Cennick and his friends declared that they were expelled for holding the doctrine of election. Wesley retorted that they knew that was not the case, as there were predestinarians in the societies in London and Bristol, nor did he "ever yet put any one out of either because he held that opinion." It was this division and the continued controversy which led Wesley to preach against the doctrine publicly.

In 1740 Whitefield wrote to Wesley :

“ MY DEAR BROTHER: For Christ’s sake, avoid all disputation. Do not oblige me to preach against you; I had rather die.”

But on his return to England in 1741 he published a pamphlet which contained a letter from Wesley, who complained against this, remarking that if Whitefield was constrained to bear his testimony on the general subject, he might have done it by issuing a treatise without calling his name in question; that he had, however, said enough of what was wholly foreign to the question to make an open, and, he feared, an irreparable breach. He then proceeded to show him how easy it would be for him to answer Whitefield, but that he would not do so. Wesley affirmed subsequently that “ those who believed universal redemption had no desire to separate, but that those who held particular redemption would not hear of any accommodation, being determined to have no fellowship with men who were in such dangerous errors; so there were now two sorts of Methodists—those for particular and those for general redemption.”

Into the controversy all bodies of dissenters were drawn, and in it many members and ministers of the Church of England participated. Whitefield was more bitterly attacked than Wesley, and all opponents of Methodism united in the prediction that this dispute would soon bring to an end the “ fanatical schism.”

Whitefield preached against the Wesleys by name in Moorfields, and when invited to the “ Foundry,” with Charles Wesley sitting near, he introduced the subject and protested against their teaching. He was temporarily so unpopular that his congregations during the week numbered less than three hundred. At all times, however,

thousands heard him on Sunday. Such were his eloquence, simplicity, and fervor that his popularity fully returned. The personal estrangement between him and Wesley fortunately lasted but a short time.

From that time forward those who sympathized with Whitefield consorted, being aided by the Countess of Huntingdon, whose wealth, social standing, and liberality were such as to assist greatly in the establishment of Calvinistic Methodism. She helped to build sixty-four chapels in different parts of the kingdom, and gave away more than a hundred thousand pounds, selling her jewels and devoting the proceeds to chapel-building and other religious work.

Prior to the formal separation of Wesley and Whitefield many little societies had been formed, but, being left without superintendence, most of them dissolved. Peter Bohler recommended the formation of one in London. By January, 1739, it numbered sixty, and met in Fetter Lane in connection with the Moravian Church, with which several of its members were finally incorporated.

In the summer of 1739 a Methodist society was formed in Bristol, where were already several little societies, which now united. A similar movement took place in Kingswood; another in Bath. Wesley places the time when the first of the united societies was formed toward the close of the year 1739. "From that time he distinguishes what he sometimes designates the United Societies, and at other times the United Society, from all other religious associations with which he had been previously connected."<sup>1</sup>

The Fetter Lane society was practically formed by Peter Bohler, who prepared its constitution. But serious differ-

<sup>1</sup> "Centennial of Wesleyan Methodism," by Thomas Jackson, president of the Wesleyan Conference (American edition, G. Mason & T. Lane, New York, 1839).

ences arose, some of the members denouncing the Christian ministry as an institution, some opposing all ordinances, and others affirming that silence was the best substitute for the means of grace. Finally, on Sunday, July 6, 1740, Wesley read to the society his objections to these errors, and, being resisted, departed, accompanied by a score of the members, followed later by fifty more, including most of the women.

Eight months previous to this Wesley had secured a building in Moorfields formerly used for the casting of cannon, and had opened it for regular public worship November 11, 1739. Though this was eight months before he separated from the Moravians, many have spoken of it as the beginning of organized Methodism.

Wherever the Wesleys had traveled while affiliating with the Moravians they had formed "men bands" and "women bands," afterward subdivided according to whether the members were married or single. They were to meet punctually at least once a week, sing and pray, and speak in order, revealing the true state of their souls, confessing to one another their faults in word and deed and their various temptations. To each band was assigned a leader, whose duty it was to describe his own state and then call upon the rest. Wesley met all the men every Wednesday evening, and the women on Sunday. He proposed, also, that one evening in the quarter all the men, on a second all the women, should meet, and on a third men and women together. The last he called love-feasts.

Some objected on the ground that these meetings were man's invention. Wesley replied: "They are prudential helps, grounded on reason and experience, in order to apply the general rules given in Scripture according to particular circumstances." Others affirmed that the bands were "mere popery." Wesley responded with severity: "Do they not yet know that the only popish confession is the con-

fession made by a single person to a priest? . . . Whereas that we practice is the confession of several persons conjointly, not to a priest, but to each other."

These bands did not, as many suppose, give rise to the classes. The class-meeting in Methodism preceded. Wesley was talking with several of the society in Bristol concerning the means of paying its debts, when one said: "Let every member of the society give a penny a week till all are paid." Another answered: "But many of them are poor and cannot afford to do it." Then said the proposer of this method: "Put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give anything, well; I will call on them weekly; and if they cannot give anything I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly, receive what they give, and make up what is wanting."

In the working of this plan, which proved most efficient, the leaders reported to Wesley that they found certain persons "who did not live as they should." He called together all the leaders and instructed them to make particular inquiry into the behavior of those whom they saw weekly. This was the germ of the modern class-meeting, which in process of time incorporated all those elements of the bands which were in practice found to be useful.

As the number of societies increased it became necessary to supply them with preachers. The first lay preacher was Thomas Maxfield, his appointment being made in the absence of Wesley, who was disposed to condemn it, but afterward withdrew his opposition. The second was Thomas Richards, and the third Thomas Westell. Some of these early lay preachers displayed great ability, among them John Nelson; another, Thomas Olivers, became famous both as a preacher and as a poet of high order.

Separate places of worship were now essential, because



these clergymen were excluded from the churches of the Establishment, and because lay preachers were in no case allowed to conduct services therein, and also on account of the great number of their converts. The first chapel erected by the Wesleys was in Bristol; but prior to its completion the "Foundry" was opened in London. Chapels rapidly followed in Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, London, Birmingham, and the chief towns of the kingdom.

The success of the movement under the Wesleys was so wonderful that during the year 1742, John, the acknowledged final authority, was employing twenty-three itinerant lay preachers and several local preachers; the distinction being that the former gave their entire time to the work, while the latter pursued ordinary business, preaching at such points as they could reach from their places of abode.

The opening of the year 1744 wore a calamitous aspect. It was a time of war. Reports were set afloat that the Methodists were in collusion with the papal Pretender, that Wesley was a Jesuit, an Anabaptist, a Quaker, and that he had been prosecuted for "unlawfully selling gin."

A proclamation was issued in London requiring all Roman Catholics to leave the city. Wesley stayed behind to show that he was not one, but was summoned before the authorities and made to take the oath of allegiance to the king, and to sign a declaration against popery. Charles Wesley was indicted because in a public prayer he had besought God to "call home his banished ones," which was interpreted to mean the House of Stuart.

Wesley's "Journal" shows that in scores of places the Methodists were mobbed while holding services in the public streets and at their own houses. In some towns rioting lasted for a week, and the sufferings of the early martyrs were paralleled. Frequently parish ministers promoted the mobs, and magistrates were not willing to pro-

tect the Methodists. The natural passions of converted men of giant strength were roused, and it was with difficulty that the Wesleys could maintain order among their followers by beseeching them not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good.

The conduct of John Wesley was so consistent, his moral power so great, that he was worth more to his followers than a band of armed men. At Newcastle, where the mob spirit was rising, he preached in the public square from the text, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." Tradition says that every word was uttered in a tone of command as difficult to resist as if it came from the lips of the greatest general upon the field of battle. Wesley, in his usual laconic manner, states of one such scene that he "found a great mob, and after spending an hour in taming them, exhorted them for two hours more." The ringleaders promised to make no further disturbance. The next day, however, the people, having heard a false report of a victory of the British over the French, gave themselves up to drunkenness and renewed the attack.

In Bristol, Nottingham, and throughout all Cornwall similar scenes took place. Wesley attended service in the Church of St. Ives, and heard the Methodists denounced as "enemies of the church and state, Jacobites and papists."

The announcement of his text was often sufficient to comfort the flock. When he came to a town where the society was broken up, and met the minister fleeing from a mob led by the mayor, he immediately addressed the frightened people from these words: "Enter into the rock, and hide yourselves as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

This was the general condition; but opposition met and conquered in the Christian spirit contributed to the increase of the societies.

On the 25th of June, 1744, the first Methodist conference was called in London. There were present John and Charles Wesley; John Hodges, rector of Wenvo, in Wales; Henry Piers, vicar of Bexley, who had been led by Charles Wesley into the light; Samuel Taylor, vicar of Quinton; and John Meriton. Besides these there were four lay preachers—Thomas Maxfield, Thomas Richards, John Bennett, and John Downes. The participants in the conference applied themselves to determining and defining repentance, saving faith, justification, sanctification, free will, the witness of the Spirit, and other doctrines. The conclusions reached, together with the general proceedings, were recorded in the form of minutes. Some almost prophetic statements are found therein, such as: "We believe the Methodists will either be thrust out or will leaven the whole church." Practical questions of permanent importance were raised, such as: "Is it lawful to bear arms?" and "Is it lawful to use the law?" There was a Quaker element in the societies inclined to deny the first of these, and a Moravian element disposed to question the second; but after debate both were decided affirmatively. Another conference was called in Bristol in 1745; subsequently these were held annually.

In 1747 Wesley visited Ireland, where Thomas Williams, a lay preacher from England, a few months before had established a society which had increased until it then numbered three hundred members. The arrival of Wesley promoted the work, and he found it necessary again to visit that country in 1748. The Irish Roman Catholics, with their customary violence, attacked the Methodists. Grand juries "presented" Charles Wesley as a vagabond and a disturber of her Majesty's peace, and the appearance of John was the signal for the gathering of mobs.

Before 1758 he had visited every part of Ireland except

Sligo, and in that year entered this region, where he found a colony of German origin. During the reign of Queen Anne one hundred and ten families from the Palatinate had settled in the town of Court Matress and neighboring hamlets. Being without a minister, they had become notorious for immorality and irreligion; but Methodists had effected a reformation.

Wesley delivered several discourses in a "preaching-house" in the center of Court Matress, and was so much pleased with the order and superior morality of this and two neighboring communities that he declared that three such towns could hardly be found elsewhere in England or Ireland, and exclaimed: "How will these poor foreigners rise up in the day of judgment against those that are round about them!" Thus, regardless of the nationality of those to whom the gospel was preached, the Word of the Lord had free course, and was glorified; until, when the twenty-first conference was held at Manchester, August 20, 1765, it was deemed advisable to publish the minutes, which had been regularly taken, but not given to the public. They contain the names of the preachers admitted on trial, the stations, helpers, and circuits, with all the appointments, and rules of discipline for both societies and preachers. There were at that time 25 circuits with 71 preachers in England, 4 with 4 preachers in Scotland, 2 with 2 preachers in Wales, and 8 with 15 preachers in Ireland; making 39 circuits and 92 lay itinerants, besides the local preachers, the Wesleys, and those clergymen of the Church of England that coöperated with them.

The *doctrines* taught by Wesley and his itinerant and lay preachers included the fundamental principles of Christianity as held by the Reformed churches generally, but excluded ritualism and sacramentarianism, and divided from Calvinism on unconditional election, predestination, final

perseverance of the saints, and kindred doctrines. In opposition to these it affirmed that notwithstanding human depravity a measure of free will is restored to all together with that supernatural light which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world"; and that those who have been truly converted may fall away and be finally lost.

Specific emphasis was also placed on the possibility of instantaneous conversion, and on the witness of the Spirit, which was explicitly defined and inculcated as the privilege of every believer. The doctrine of Christian perfection—not a perfection which does not admit of a continual increase, but a freedom from sin, from evil desires and evil tempers, and from pride; "the sum of which is the loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; . . . that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love"—was constantly taught; also that it was not usually, if ever, attained at the moment of conversion, that it is attainable by faith and that only, and that its attainment is possible in this life.

The conditions for membership were few and simple, yet they contained a standard of spiritual life and conduct to which comparatively few Christians in any age have attained. The General Rules of the United Societies, stating these conditions, were issued May 1, 1743, and signed by John and Charles Wesley; and few changes have been made.<sup>1</sup> The peculiar institutions for the promotion of the Christian life and the exercise of discipline were the regular itinerant ministry in the form of circuits, involving constant change, and covering a vast extent of country by uniting in one plan regular itinerants and local preachers; the classes, with their leaders and the authority reposed in them; the bands and their leaders; the district meetings and conferences; love-feasts and watch-nights. Members

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

of the societies were instructed to receive the holy communion at parish churches, and in their own meetings when it was administered by one of those regularly ordained ministers of the Established Church who coöperated with the Wesleys. Dissenters connected with the societies were allowed to receive the Lord's Supper at the altars of their respective religious bodies, as, during this period, both John and Charles Wesley and their coadjutors of the Church of England constantly declared that they did not cherish the purpose of forming a new sect or church. This fact accounts for various restrictions and requisitions which no church in Christendom would have thought it wise to impose, and the absence of various provisions essential to a church. Neither ministers nor members, accused of unsoundness in doctrine, defectiveness of experience, inefficiency, or immorality, had the privilege of a trial, much less of an appeal, but were excluded by the exercise of the judgment of the founder. Nor could they complain against this, since none were obliged to remain, and all had accepted his teachings with that definite understanding.

The observance of *watch-night* originated at Kingswood, where the depraved colliers spent the last night of the year in drunken revels and bacchanalian scenes. The converts to Methodism changed these meetings into religious festivals. Some advised John Wesley to put an end to them, to make the breach greater between the old and the new life, and to prevent occasional disorders. He took the matter under consideration and replied: "Upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather I believed it might be made of more general use; so I sent them word that I designed to watch with them on the Friday nearest the full moon, that we might have light thither and back again. I gave public notice of this

the Sunday before, and, withal, that I intended to preach; desiring they, and they only, would meet me there who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine, and we continued until a little beyond noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God."

Wesley later declares: "Exceeding great are the blessings that we have found therein. It has generally been an extremely solemn season, when the Word of God sunk deep into the heart, even of those who till then knew him not." To the charge that it was only the novelty of the thing he replied: "Be it so; however, the impression then made on many souls has never since been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use of novelty or any other indifferent circumstance in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together."

During this entire period Charles Wesley was the coadjutor and counselor of the founder; a religious poet of the first order, a preacher of amazing eloquence and force, though much more variable than his brother. Many of his hymns were improvised while preaching; others were written for special occasions and by John Wesley were set to music. The enthusiasm of Methodists made them the finest singers in the kingdom.

In 1738, before their conversion, in the technical term, they had published a book of selections, which included some original hymns; the next year two, the following year one, and in 1742 another, in which most of the hymns were by Charles Wesley. Whatever subject disturbed the public mind, his prolific muse took up, and a hymn or a poem was the result. In 1749 a collection of hymns and sacred poems in two volumes was published, with the name

of Charles Wesley alone as the author. Many thousands singing marvelously fervent descriptions of religious experience in every stage from conviction to the highest attainments of Christian life—the whole sustained by a framework of doctrine rigorously clear and logical in definition, expressed in vigorous English—produced an effect hardly second to that of the preaching. It was alike instructive and inspiring, afforded the materials for maintaining services in the absence of preachers, and attracted many to the meetings who would never have been drawn to hear any minister, however renowned.

An incidental benefit, the value of which it is difficult to overestimate, was that Methodists committed the hymns to memory, thus enriching their vocabularies by the language and poetic similes, and especially by the spiritual and pathetic terms with which they abounded, so that they were able to speak and pray with astonishing eloquence.

Through life Charles Wesley suffered from ill health, which, in the opinion of Dr. Whitehead, the physician of the family, was the result of the asceticism of his early days. He was of great use to his brother, especially in counteracting his natural credulity and warning him against a tendency to believe fair promises, religious words, and deferential manners. Without the characteristics of leadership, he was yet so strong in High-church feeling that on various occasions, if his views had prevailed, the growth of Methodism would have been checked, and little more than an invisible influence would have descended to future generations.

The most useful and in all respects the most extraordinary accession to Methodism was Jean Guillaume de la Fléchère, a native of Switzerland, a student of philology and philosophy, a master of French, German, Latin, Hebrew,



and Greek, educated at Geneva, and intended for the ministry, but choosing the army because he was unable to subscribe to the doctrine of predestination. At twenty years of age he enlisted with the rank of captain, under the Portuguese flag. About 1755 he united with the Methodist Society, and in two years was ordained in the Church of England, becoming in 1760 rector of Madeley, where he equaled, if he did not surpass, the brothers Wesley in zeal, fidelity, liberality, and self-denial. He affiliated with the Countess of Huntingdon, and became president of a theological seminary established by her, but resigned on account of doctrinal differences. Subsequently he espoused the cause of Mr. Wesley. This devout man became an ascetic. "He lived on vegetables, and for some time on milk and water and bread; he sat up two whole nights in every week for the purpose of praying, reading, and meditating on religious things; and on other nights never allowed himself to sleep as long as he could keep his attention to the book before him." He afterward acknowledged the error of this course. About the time of his ordination, determining to spend his days in England, he Anglicized his name, calling himself John Fletcher. Southey<sup>1</sup> speaks of him as "a saintly man, carrying on the work of controversy with correspondent candor and distinguished ability." By the sweetness of his spirit he was of immense advantage to John Wesley, defending him when he could not defend himself, and exerting a much-needed influence in the direction of universal charity and caution. The testimony of Southey is not open to the charge of exaggeration: "Fletcher of Madeley was a man of whom Methodism may well be proud, as the most able of its defenders; and whom the Church of England may hold in honorable remembrance, as one

<sup>1</sup> Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. ii., p. 208.

of the most pious and excellent of her sons. Fletcher in any communion would have been a saint.”<sup>1</sup>

At the Conference of 1766 an imperfect attempt was made to ascertain the number of members; but not until the Conference of 1767 was the task accomplished. It then appeared that there were 22,410 members in the English societies, 2801 in the Irish, 468 in the Scotch, and 232 in the Welsh.

<sup>1</sup> For his principal works see Bibliography.

## CHAPTER V.

### IN THE NEW WORLD.

AS in nature, the soil, the climate, and the culture, no less than the germ, control the growth of every species, so in the formation of civil and ecclesiastical institutions the characteristics, number, and spirit of a people influence development as powerfully as does the initial principle or impulse.

In September, 1739, the natal year of Methodism, George Whitefield arrived in Philadelphia, and during the succeeding year and a half produced the profoundest religious impression, laying the foundations of numerous religious organizations. The influence of Whitefield can be explained in part by the fact that, ten years after this marvelous visit to Philadelphia, that city contained only 2076 houses. Allowing an average of five persons to a family—a large estimate—such was the power of his voice that when he preached in the open air he could easily have commanded the entire adult population.

The first Protestant church in the city of Baltimore was erected during the year 1739. At this time the colony of Pennsylvania had a population of less than 50,000; Virginia not far from 70,000; New Jersey a little over 50,000, of whom nearly one tenth were slaves; and the province of New York is estimated at 65,000, with an annual rate of increase of a thousand. The settlement and development of the country progressed irregularly, being stimulated or retarded by local circumstances and political and pecuniary complications in England.

In 1750 a census of New England showed 340,000, and of South Carolina, 64,000. The methods of disseminating intelligence throughout the country were chiefly by the few and slow mails, by special messenger, and by conversation. The first newspaper in Connecticut was established at New Haven in 1755, and the first in North Carolina was published in December of the same year. As late as 1757 the city of New York had but 12,000 inhabitants, and Philadelphia only 1000 more. Delaware had no newspaper until 1761; the city of Providence, R. I., none until 1762. The "Georgia Gazette," the first started in that colony, and the only one for more than twelve years, issued its first number at Savannah in 1763.

In 1764 many German and French Protestants and also English and Scotch, stimulated by bounties in land offered by the legislature, migrated to South Carolina. The same year Pittsburg, Pa., was laid out, and its settlement commenced.

This epitome of the history of the country for the first six years of the seventh decade of the eighteenth century suggests the conditions found by a company of Irish Palatines who sailed from Limerick to the city of New York in 1760. A writer in the "Irish Evangelist," one hundred years later, in an animated and pathetic manner describes their departure.<sup>1</sup> The chief figure is a young man of thoughtful look and resolute bearing, evidently the leader of the party. "He had been one of the first-fruits to Christ among his countrymen, had been the class-leader of their infant Church, and often in their humble chapel had ministered to them the Word of life. . . . His name was Philip Embury. His party consisted of his wife, Mary Switzer, to whom he was married in Rathkeale Church, on the 27th of November, 1758; two of his brothers and their

<sup>1</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., pp. 51, 52.

families; Peter Switzer, probably a brother of his wife; Paul Heck, and Barbara, his wife; Valer Tettler, Philip Morgan, and a family of the Dulmages." The vessel reached New York August 10, 1760.

There were doubtless a few other Methodists in the United States, but none had become the nucleus of a Methodist society, or become affiliated with any, with a possible noteworthy exception. Light is thrown upon his age by an ancient record in the possession of his granddaughter, made by Samuel Embury, as follows: "My father, Philip Embury, died in August, 1773, aged forty-five years." At no place in the record can the date of Embury's birth be found, but that of his baptism is given: "Ye 29th of 7ber [September], 1728." As it was the custom in the family to baptize the children when but a few weeks old, his age at the time of his arrival in New York must have been about thirty-two years.

Before sailing for America he was a carpenter, and also served as a Wesleyan local preacher. He had a good education; his orthography was faultless, chirography remarkably clear, and punctuation accurate. The date of his conversion is preserved, and its character may be inferred from a fragment of a manuscript in his own handwriting:

"On Christmas day;—being Monday ye 25th of December in the year 1752; the Lord shone into my soul by a glimpse of his Redeeming love: being an earnest of my redemption in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

"PHIL: EMBURY." <sup>1</sup>

The presumption is that he lived a consistent life and endeavored, at least by his example, to save those who had

<sup>1</sup> "Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism," by J. B. Wakeley, D.D. (New York, Wilbur B. Ketcham, 1889).

accompanied him from the temptations to which they were exposed; but there is no evidence that he exhibited genuine Methodist zeal or conducted public religious services in the New World for at least six years. Few of those who accompanied him were Methodists, though some writers, more enthusiastic than accurate, have spoken of the arrival of "Embury and a whole ship-load of Wesleyans." The others were members of the Protestant Church in Ireland, but knew nothing of experimental religion as taught by Wesley. In 1765 another vessel landed in New York, containing five families. Some of these were related to Embury, and most of them he knew.

The account of what may be properly termed the outbreak of Methodism in New York is taken from a letter to Dr. Abel Stevens by a reliable authority, Dr. G. C. M. Roberts: "A few of them only were Wesleyans. Mrs. Barbara Heck, who had been residing in New York since 1760, visited them frequently. One of the company, Paul Ruckle, was her eldest brother. It was when visiting them on one of these occasions that she found some of the party engaged in a game of cards. There is no proof, either direct or indirect, that any of them were Wesleyans and connected with Embury. Her spirit was roused, and, doubtless emboldened by her long and intimate acquaintance with them in Ireland, she seized the cards, threw them into the fire, and then most solemnly warned them of their danger and duty. Leaving them, she went directly to the dwelling of Embury, who was her cousin. It was located upon Barrack Street, now Park Place. After narrating what she had seen and done, under the influence of the divine Spirit and with power, she appealed to him to be no longer silent, but to preach the Word forthwith. She parried his excuses, and urged him to commence at once in his own house and to his own people. He consented,

and she went out and collected four persons, who with herself constituted his audience. After singing and prayer he preached to them and enrolled them in a class. He continued thereafter to meet them weekly. Embury was not among the card-players, nor in the same house with them."

Wakeley gives some particulars of Mrs. Heck's appeal. When she found Embury she exclaimed, "Brother Embury, you *must* preach to us, or we shall all go to hell, and God will require our blood at your hands!" Though astonished and alarmed, Embury, to quiet his conscience, inquired, "How can I preach? for I have neither a house nor a congregation." The zealous woman replied, "Preach in your own house and to your own company first." The result was that he consented to preach, and she went forth to gather a congregation.

The interesting question whether Philip Embury was engaged in the game of cards was raised many years ago. Wakeley says: "Some Methodists have admitted it, and the enemies of Methodism have said in ridicule that American Methodism originated at the card-table." He then investigates the subject and furnishes conclusive testimony that Embury was not present. The action of Mrs. Heck shows that he was the only man to whom she could appeal, and justifies Wakeley's remark that "he was a very diffident man, and his not doing was among his darkest deeds."

At this first service, held in 1766, the month and day being unknown, those present enrolled their names in a class and promised to attend regularly at the house for religious instruction.

Begun under such circumstances, Methodism could but succeed. This small number contained latent forces sufficient to arouse a primitive community dead in trespasses and sins, and to make an impression of some kind upon any

community; for in a thousand hamlets and towns of Great Britain and Ireland the Word of the Lord had free course, ran, and was glorified.

Soon Embury's house could not hold all who desired to hear, and a larger room was hired, to provide for the expense of which collections were taken. In a few months fourteen or more had been genuinely converted, which were formed into classes, one of men and the other of women. The instructions given by Wesley and his helpers to local preachers, and the responsibilities imposed upon such, and also upon class-leaders, show that Embury, who was both a class-leader and a licensed local preacher, understood Methodism, and knew how to organize bands, classes, and societies.

It is not surprising that in the small city, without much to excite the people, with no daily papers to absorb attention by presenting the news of the civilized and the uncivilized world, great interest should have been kindled by such a movement. Even at this late day, notwithstanding all the counter-attractions, a "revival" in a time of peace will attract larger concourses and maintain interest longer than any other public excitement. Besides, Whitefield had preached often in New York only three years before, and Wesleyan Methodism, for a time, undoubtedly derived considerable advantage from the estimate in which he was held, by the affiliation of some of his converts and the familiarity of the public with the name of Methodism, which was popularly applied to his spirit and methods.

The place where Embury preached was not far from the quarters of the British troops. Three musicians of the regiment, drawn by the singing of the Methodists, so much more spirited than the music of the Established Church or of the dissenters, attended the services, were converted, and were commissioned by Embury as "exhorters." The



poorer part of the community furnished the majority of the converts. The neglected paupers in the almshouse received the attention of the evangelists, and heard with delight the promise of everlasting life. The superintendent of the institution invited Embury to preach there, and, besides several of "the non-criminal wards of the State," was himself added to the list of converts.

The attendance at the meetings constantly increased. Early in 1767, probably in the month of February, a stranger, in military dress and wearing a sword, appeared among them. He was obviously an officer of the royal army, and the few Methodists seem to have been disturbed, perhaps frightened, suspecting that he might have come to question them concerning the conversion of the musicians and other members of the army. But his devout conduct allayed their fears, for he conformed to their methods. At the close he introduced himself as "Captain Thomas Webb, of the king's service, and also a soldier of the cross and a spiritual son of John Wesley," and informed Embury that he had been authorized by Wesley to preach.

Webb was in the siege of Louisburg, where he lost his right eye, and at midnight, September 12, 1759, was with those who landed at the foot of the tangled ravine below the plains of Abraham, and in the van led by Howe which scaled those heights before dawn, where he fought in the murderous battle of Quebec in the midst of the fiercest carnage, seeing scores of his companions killed, but escaping himself with a wound in his right arm. Five years after that battle he heard John Wesley preach in Bristol, and became a zealous Christian. In 1765 he joined the Methodist Society, and one day entered a Methodist congregation at Bath. The circuit preacher having failed to come, Webb, in his regimentals, advanced to the altar and began to speak,

rousing deep feeling, especially while recounting the facts of his personal experience. The occurrence was narrated to John Wesley, who immediately licensed him to preach. Webb frequently referred to his hairbreadth escapes, and the manner in which he lost his eye has probably never been paralleled: "A ball hit him on the bone which guards the right eye, and, taking an oblique direction, burst the eyeball, and passing through his palate into his mouth, he swallowed it." The wounded were put into a boat, and all were assisted to the land except Webb. One of the men said, "He needs no help; he is dead enough." But he was just able to whisper, "No, I am not dead." It was three months before he could attend to his military duty. His escape was so narrow—"for had the ball struck him a hairbreadth higher or lower it would have taken his life"—that he felt that in a peculiar manner he owed his life to God. Of his scars he was not ashamed, and over his eyeless socket he wore a green shade. At the time of his arrival in New York he was acting barrack-master at Albany. He loved the Bible to such an extent as to study it in the original Greek, and his Greek Testament is preserved to this day in the United States. Much can be learned of his character by references in the writings of John and Charles Wesley. Some years later the former heard him, and records in his journal his opinion: "I admire the wisdom of God in still raising up various preachers, according to the various tastes of men. The captain is all life and fire; therefore, although he is not deep or regular, yet many who would not hear a better preacher flock together to hear him. And many are convinced under his preaching; some justified; a few built up in love."

Again Wesley says: "Captain Webb kindled a flame here, and it is not yet gone out. The people generally

were much quickened. I found his preaching in the street at Winchester had been blessed greatly."

Captain Webb was equally successful with the Irish. Wesley wrote: "Captain Webb is now in Dublin; invite him to visit Limerick; he is a man of fire, and the power of God constantly accompanies his word."

Charles Wesley does not seem to have thought as highly of him, for when John Fletcher and Captain Webb were trying to induce Joseph Benson, the preacher and commentator, to identify himself with the American work, Charles Wesley wrote to Mr. Benson: "I have barely time to say your own reasons for not going to America, and Christopher Hopper's, are unanswerable. Mr. Fletcher is only the captain's echo. The captain's impressions are no more (or very little more) to be depended upon than George Bell's. He is an inexperienced, honest, zealous, loving enthusiast." Nevertheless he seemed to be fond of the captain, and in a letter to Mr. Rankin two years later he writes: "My love to Captain Webb when you see him."

The "impressions" of which Charles Wesley speaks related to the coming glory of the settlements in the Western Hemisphere, and the corresponding opportunity for the effectual spread of the gospel. The world now knows that it would have been impossible for Captain Thomas Webb, or any other preacher or poet, to prophesy greater things than have come to pass. Joseph Benson, however, waited for a "more effectual call" that never came.

When Captain Webb preached he reverently laid his sword on the table or desk before him. This, as it was probably the only circumstance of the kind the people of this country had ever seen, military men, especially officers, being notoriously indifferent to practical religion, had some effect in attracting the large congregations which gathered

to hear him. But he was a man of extraordinary eloquence, often compared to Whitefield. He was especially effective with military men, who admired his martial bearing and powerful voice, and he was the means of the conversion of many soldiers and several influential officers. One of these, who became a powerful local preacher, in an account of his conversion, says that he "thought the word of command by such an excellent officer could distinctly be heard throughout the line, from right to left." Written memorials of his discourses attach much influence to his piercing eye, which seemed to scrutinize every listener. But probably the strongest, because the most deliberate and competent, testimony to his powers is that of the first Vice-President and second President of the United States, John Adams, who describes him as "the old soldier—one of the most eloquent men I ever heard; he reaches the imagination and touches the passions very well, and expresses himself with great propriety."<sup>1</sup>

The next step was the renting of a room on William Street, known as "the rigging loft," sixty by eighteen feet. Services were held there three times a week, Webb and Embury preaching alternately. Jesse Lee's "History of the Methodists," published in 1810 (p. 25), says: "There are a few persons still living in New York who met with the society in the rigging loft, and are pleased at the recollection of what the Lord did for them in their little society, when they were weak and ignorant in the things of religion, but were united together in Christian love and fellowship."

Captain Webb saw the necessity of permanent accommodations for the Methodists.<sup>2</sup> He was anticipated in this design by Barbara Heck, who had "made the enterprise a

<sup>1</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 62.

matter of prayer," and testified that she had received from the Lord, "with inexpressible sweetness and power, the answer, 'I the Lord will do it.'" She also devised an economical plan for the edifice, which was approved by the society.

Wakeley<sup>1</sup> doubts whether a house of worship would have been erected at that time without the influence of Captain Webb and the money contributed by him. Dr. Stevens expresses the opinion that it would probably not even have been attempted without his aid; he was the first subscriber, pledging thirty pounds—one third more than any other person gave—nor was his interest exhausted then, for he loaned the society two hundred pounds, and as the enterprise progressed, increased the loan to three hundred, these financial services being rendered in the year 1768. Nor was this all, for he remitted a considerable part of the interest, secured contributions from friends amounting to thirty-two pounds, and sold books for the benefit of the enterprise. Captain Webb was one of the original trustees, though to Embury belongs the glory of being "the first trustee, first treasurer, first class-leader, and first preacher."

In less than three years from its beginning Methodism in the city of New York had made an impression both wide and deep. The society leased the site in John Street in 1768, purchasing it two years later. The first subscription paper records the results of a successful appeal to the citizens, and contains nearly two hundred and fifty names, including all classes, from the mayor and the primitive Methodists down to African slaves, known only by their Christian names. The most distinguished names in the early history of New York, founders of the great families who have flourished and still exist, the Livingstons,

<sup>1</sup> "Lost Chapters," p. 144.

Duanes, Delanceys, Lights, Stuyvesants, Lispenards, are there, as well as Dr. Samuel Auchmuty, rector of Trinity Church, and his assistant, the Rev. John Ogveldsire, and the Rev. Charles Inglis, assistant to Dr. Auchmuty and also his successor. Oliver Delancey, Esq., gave six pounds ten shillings. Frederick De Peyster was among the subscribers, also Philip Livingston, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Side by side with these names are those of Margaret and Rachel, two slaves hired to take care of the preacher's house. Among the subscribers are the names of thirty-five women.

The preamble of the paper, to which the signatures of those who contributed were affixed, is an important document, showing that at that time the Methodists had no idea that they would become a distinct denomination of Christians; in fact, their appeal for general support was made upon the assumption that they were not to be.

"A number of persons, desirous to worship God in spirit and truth, commonly called Methodists (under the direction of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley), whom it is evident God has been pleased to bless in their meetings in New York, thinking it would be more to the glory of God and the good of souls had they a more convenient place to meet in, where the Gospel of Jesus Christ might be preached without distinction of sects or parties; and as Mr. Philip Embury is a member and helper in the Gospel, they humbly beg the assistance of Christian friends, in order to enable them to build a small house for that purpose, not doubting but the God of all consolation will abundantly bless all such as are willing to contribute to the same."

The deed, also, to the ground upon which the first preaching-house was built, made to the Rev. Richard

Boardman and others at the termination of the lease which they had taken when the building was erected, is one of the most important Methodist historical documents extant.

It reads: "TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said two lots of ground, meeting-house, and premises hereinbefore mentioned and described, and hereby granted and released, with all and every the appurtenances unto the said Richard Boardman, Joseph Pilmoor, William Lupton, Thomas Webb, John Southwell, Henry Newton, and James Jarvis, their heirs and assigns, forever. NEVERTHELESS, UPON SPECIAL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE, and to the intent that they and the survivors of them, and all other trustees for the time being do and shall permit John Wesley, late of Lincoln College, in the University of Oxford, cleark, and such other persons as he, the said John Wesley, shall from time to time appoint, and at all times during his natural life, and no other person or persons, to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said meeting-house and premises.

"That the said John Wesley, and such other person or persons as he shall from time to time appoint, may therein preach and expound God's Holy Word; and after his, the said John Wesley, deceased, upon further trust and confidence, and to the intent that the said trustees and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, do and shall permit Charles Wesley, late of Christ's Church College, Oxford, cleark, and such person or persons as he shall from time to time appoint, and at all times during his life, and no other, to have and enjoy the full use and benefit of the said meeting-house and premises for the purposes aforesaid; and after the decease of the survivors of the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley, *then upon further trust and confidence, that the said Richard Boardman and the rest of the hereinbefore mentioned trustees, or the major part of them, or the survivors of them, and the major part of the*

trustees for the time being, *shall, and from time to time, and FOREVER thereafter will, permit such person or persons as shall be appointed at the yearly conference of the people called Methodists in London, Bristol, Leeds, and the city of New-York aforesaid, and no others, to have and enjoy the said premises for the purposes aforesaid, provided always that the said person or persons so from time to time to be chosen as aforesaid, preach no other doctrine than is contained in the said John Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament and his four volumes of Sermons; and upon further trust and confidence, that as often as any of the trustees hereby appointed, or the trustees for the time being, shall die or cease to be a member of the society commonly called Methodists, the rest of the said trustees for the time being, as soon as conveniently may be, shall and may choose another trustee or trustees, in order to keep up such a number of trustees that they may in no time hereafter be less than seven nor more than nine."*

The trustees bought the material and transacted business for the building in their own names and on their personal securities. Embury, skilled in carpentry, labored on the structure, constructing its pulpit with his own hands. The province being under the régime of Great Britain, dissenters were not allowed to build churches in the city of New York; the Established Church not only had the right of way, but in its behalf obstructions of various kinds were placed in the by-paths which others were attempting to traverse.

The building was of stone, sixty feet by forty-two. It was necessary to have a fireplace and chimney so as to evade the law, which prohibited the erection of "regular churches" not under the jurisdiction of the Church of England. Wakeley informs us that at first there were no stairs or breastwork to the galleries, the hearers ascending by a



ladder; and even the seats on the lower floor had no backs; nor were there class-rooms, lecture-room, chorister, or choir.

On the thirtieth day of October, 1768, Embury ascended the pulpit which he had constructed, and preached the dedicatory sermon from Hosea x. 12: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Lee states that the house was sufficiently large to hold twelve or fourteen hundred. This does not agree with Stevens, who says that "within two years from its consecration we have reports of at least a thousand persons crowding it to the area in its front." It was named Wesley Chapel, and Dr. Dixon, an eminent Wesleyan, says: "This was most likely the first chapel called by his name, for most assuredly John Wesley would never allow either chapel, society, or anything else to be called after him in England so long as he lived and possessed the power to prevent it." In 1770 a parsonage was erected adjacent to the chapel. The city of New York then contained twenty thousand inhabitants.

After his retirement with full pay as captain, Webb had leisure to do what he would. Relatives of his wife residing at Jamaica, Long Island, he removed to that place, hired a house, and preached in it, and "twenty-four persons received justifying grace." He made many preaching-tours through New Jersey, and on his first visit to a town formed a class, and on the second or third organized a society. It was he who planted Methodism in Pemberton, at Trenton, the capital of the State, and Burlington. In the last-named he preached in the market-place and in the court-house, and there Joseph Toy, one of the early settlers of New Jersey, was led to become a Christian and to identify himself with the Methodists. Appointed by his "spiritual father" the leader of a small class, he became first a local

and then a traveling preacher, giving twenty-five years to the work, and becoming one of the teachers in the first college established by Methodists. If Philip Embury founded Methodism in New York, Captain Webb was no less its founder in Philadelphia. Here he preached in a sail-loft and formed a class of seven members. It was he, also, who introduced Methodism into Delaware, and he was equally successful whether preaching in Wilmington or among the farmers and fishermen on the banks of the Brandywine River. He also lifted up his commanding voice with wonderful effect in Baltimore.

His services to American Methodism were no less on the other side of the Atlantic. He constantly appealed to Wesley to send out preachers, and in 1772 returned to England, chiefly, if not wholly, to interest Wesleyans in the work of God in the colonies.

For some years it was generally supposed that the name of Barbara Heck was Hick, that she died in New York and was buried in Trinity Churchyard, and that Paul Hick, one of the early trustees of the John Street Church, was her son. Against this it was maintained that her name was not Hick, but Heck; that with her husband and sons she removed to Camden, N. Y., in 1770 or 1771, and thence to Canada in 1774; that she died in 1804, and is buried by the side of her husband in the burying-ground of the old "Blue Church in the front of Augusta"; that Paul Hick, of New York, was a nephew of Paul Heck, the husband of Barbara, and that the change of name was made in his family.

The documents submitted in the "Christian Guardian," Canada, May 25, 1859, and in the "Christian Advocate," together with much other proof, determine the case beyond reasonable question. Dr. J. B. Wakeley<sup>1</sup> supported

<sup>1</sup> "Lost Chapters."

the view that makes the orthography of the name Hick and that represents Mrs. Heck as being buried in Trinity Churchyard, New York; but he addressed a communication to the "Christian Advocate" which showed that he was inclined to doubt the correctness of his previous opinion. The evidence that she migrated with Philip Embury from the city of New York to Camden, N. Y., and that her name was Heck, is, as to the latter point, that the signature of Paul Heck is plainly Heck, that the Irish authorities agree that this was the spelling of the name, and that William Case, perhaps the best authority in Canadian Methodist history, wrote to Nathan Bangs in 1855 that he had visited the descendants of Paul Heck and his worthy companion at their residence in Canada. Prompted by correspondence with one of the descendants to make an independent investigation, the writer was led to the same conclusion reached by Dr. Stevens, that the name of this modern Deborah was Heck, and that she died in Canada.

While Embury and Captain Webb were preaching in New York, a religious awakening of which they had never heard was spreading in Maryland. Robert Strawbridge, a native of County Leitrim, Ireland, had migrated to North America in the hope of securing for his family a better support, and settled in Frederick County, Maryland, on Sam's Creek, then strictly a backwoods country. Five years before, the Indians passed Forts Cumberland and Frederick, plundering and murdering, and continued unchecked until within eighty miles of Baltimore, which so terrified the inhabitants that the women and children were placed on board vessels in the harbor, while the residents of the surrounding country were fleeing to Baltimore for safety.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Hamilton's "Early Methodism in Maryland, Especially in Baltimore" ("Methodist Quarterly Review," July, 1856).

It is maintained by some that Robert Strawbridge preached the first sermon, formed the first society, and built the first preaching-house for Methodism in Maryland, and in America, at least three years before Wesley Chapel, in John Street, New York, was erected. In support of this view Bishop Asbury's "Journal" is quoted (vol. iii., p. 27): "Here Mr. Strawbridge formed the first society in Maryland—and America." This is not sufficient to settle the question, as there is a letter in Asbury's own handwriting in possession of Dr. George R. Crooks, of Drew Theological Seminary, in which Asbury states that Methodism was established in this country in about 1770. This is plainly an error; and in the haste and hard work of Asbury various statements were made which are incorrect. But the most remarkable document on this point is quoted in full by Hamilton, and certified as having been written by David Evans, son of John Evans, one of Strawbridge's first converts. The attestor is Samuel Evans, son of David. "John Evans, born 30th of November, 1734, about five miles from Baltimore. When about fourteen years of age his father moved to the upper part of Baltimore County, near the neighborhood of Pipe and Sam's Creek, where he resided until his death. In his twenty-fifth year he married; he had nine children, and six are now living. His parents were members of the Church of England. About the year 1764, he embraced the Methodist religion under Mr. Strawbridge." The remainder of the note consists of a statement that when the first circuit was formed in Baltimore County, Mr. Evans offered his house; it was accepted about the year 1768, and continued a preaching-house upward of forty years, during which time he was a regular class-leader. The phrase "*about* the year 1764" is too vague to settle the question.

Asbury and Coke prepared the first "Discipline" in 1785,

in which is a short account of Methodism. After reciting the services of Philip Embury and Thomas Webb, the history proceeds: "About the same time Robert Strawbridge, a local preacher from Ireland, settled in Maryland, and, preaching there, formed some societies." But whatever was true, in the opinion of Asbury, about the first sermon, he explicitly says in another place: "The first Methodist church in New York was built in 1768 or 1769." Jesse Lee doubtless had as wide a personal acquaintance and as many opportunities for information as any one of his time. He says:<sup>1</sup> "Not long after the society was formed in New York, Robert Strawbridge, from Ireland, who had settled in Frederick County, in the State of Maryland, began to hold meetings in public, and joined a society together near Pipe Creek."

Much depends upon the date of the arrival of Strawbridge in Maryland, and this it is difficult if not impossible to determine, as he began in a section which did not admit of the prompt circulation of intelligence. Strawbridge's course in Ireland, considered in connection with his temperament, renders it improbable that he would long remain in this country without lifting up his voice. In his native land he was an itinerant, but provoked a storm of opposition and persecution which not long after his conversion compelled him to remove to the county of Sligo. There "his labors were signally blessed of God through a considerable district." He preached also in the county of Cavan. Aged Methodists yet living in Ireland recall descriptions of his oratory which they heard from the lips of their parents and grandparents.

As to the exact date of his emigration to this country, John Shillington, Esq., whom Dr. Stevens describes as the

<sup>1</sup> "Short History of the Methodists," p. 25.

best Irish authority on the Methodist history and antiquities of his country, says it was not earlier than 1764 or later than 1765. The presumption of priority to Embury would be strong if it were not more than counteracted by the authority of Pilmoor, Garrettson, Lee, Henry Boehm, and George Bourne. Dr. John Atkinson, in "The Beginnings of the Wesleyan Movement in America," exhaustively discusses this question, furnishing cumulative and convincing proof that American Methodism began in New York.

On Sam's Creek he built a log meeting-house. It was twenty-two feet square, without windows, door, or floor, and, though long occupied, was never finished. Beneath its rude pulpit he buried two of his children. Like Captain Webb, he was a traveler, and extended his labors into eastern Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The Sam's Creek society soon gave four or five preachers to Methodism. Strawbridge founded the first Methodism in Baltimore and Harford counties, and the first native preacher of the continent, Richard Owen, was one of his converts. Wherever he went he raised up preachers. Substantial citizens as well as the more excitable part of the community responded to his efforts. Thomas Bond, of Harford County, father of the Rev. J. W. Bond and of the noted Thomas E. Bond, M.D., was one of many who became Methodists under his rousing appeals. Some have spoken of Strawbridge as of meager talents and limited education. While he had little learning derived from the schools, he was not ignorant in any sense which would expose him to contempt or excite levity, and possessed more than usual ability in important respects.

Though little has come down to the present time concerning his personal characteristics, fortunately one witness, Freeborn Garrettson, preëminently competent to estimate his powers, has described him. Nathan Bangs, in

his "Life of Garrettson," extracts an account of an evening which the latter spent with Strawbridge: "Mr. Strawbridge came to the house of a gentleman, near where I lived, to stay all night. I had never heard him preach, but as I had a great desire to be in company with a person who had caused so much talk in the country, I went over and sat and heard him converse till nearly midnight, and when I retired it was with these thoughts: 'I have never spent a few hours more agreeably in my life.' He spent most of his time in explaining Scripture and in giving interesting anecdotes."<sup>1</sup>

The society in New York continued to prosper, and Thomas Taylor, one of the original lessees of the site of the Methodist preaching-house in John Street, wrote to John Wesley, on the 11th of April, 1768, an important letter, in which, after describing Mr. Whitefield's first, second, and third visits, and the reaction which followed, he says: "The above appears to me to be a genuine account of the state of religion in New York ten months ago, when it pleased God to raise up Mr. Embury to employ his talent (which for several years had been hid, as it were, in a napkin) by calling sinners to repentance, and exhorting believers to let their light shine before men." After giving particulars of the work and vividly describing its reinforcement by the arrival of Captain Webb, he mentions his own arrival in the United States on the twenty-sixth day of the preceding October, and his forming the acquaintance of Embury and others. He states that Embury "lately has been more zealous than formerly, the consequence of which is that he is more lively in preaching, and his gifts as well as graces are much increased"; and "for six weeks past our house would not contain half the people." He then details plans for erecting a chapel, and says:

<sup>1</sup> Bangs's "Life of Garrettson," p. 28 (New York, 1839).

“ There is another point far more material, and in which I must importune your assistance, not only in my own name, but also in the name of the whole society. We want an able and experienced preacher, one who has both gifts and graces necessary for the work.” He commends the work accomplished by the preaching of Captain Webb and Mr. Embury, but discriminatingly adds: “ Although they are both useful, and their hearts are in the work, they want many qualifications for such an undertaking; and the progress of the gospel here depends much upon the qualifications of preachers. In regard to a preacher, if possible we must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian; one whose heart and soul are in the work; and I doubt not but by the goodness of God such a flame will be soon kindled which would never stop until it reached the great South Sea.”

Mr. Taylor informs Wesley that they could not purchase such a preacher as he described, though they might make many shifts to evade temporary inconveniences, and thus pathetically appeals to him, “ Dear sir, I entreat you, for the good of thousands, use your utmost endeavors to send one over.” He suggests that the preacher would do well to sail from Boston, Liverpool, or Dublin in the month of July or August, as in that case he would have fine weather and probably arrive in September.

The closing sentences of this letter exhibit a spirit which would win success and put to shame the luxurious apathy of many an idle minister: “ With respect to money for the payment of the preachers’ passage over: if they could not procure it we would sell our coats and shirts to procure it for them. I most earnestly beg an interest in your prayers, and trust you and many of our brethren will not forget the church in this wilderness.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bangs’s “ Life of Garrettsen,” pp. 16–20.



Others wrote to Wesley begging him to send preachers, among them Captain Webb and Thomas Bell, "a humble mechanic who had worked six days on the new chapel;" and by private correspondence the news of the progress of Methodism on this side of the Atlantic had been circulated among members of the English Wesleyan societies, some of whom had been contemplating crossing to identify themselves with the new country, but had hesitated, not willing to relinquish their associations. These made preparation to sail, and Robert Williams, a local preacher whose zeal was fired by the accounts, applied to John Wesley for authority to go over and preach. This was given on the express stipulation that when the regularly commissioned missionaries to be sent by Wesley should arrive, he would labor under their direction. Williams besought his friend Ashton to emigrate with him, and on hearing that he would go, sold his horse to pay his debts, and, carrying his saddle-bags on his arm, started for the ship with a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk, but no money for his passage. Ashton paid the expenses of both, and in due time they landed in Norfolk, Va.

Williams, who was primitive in his character and methods, at once began to preach. We are indebted for what is known of Mr. Williams's work in that city chiefly to Wakeley's "Lost Chapters," and to an old book found among the early remains of Methodism in New York, which appears to have been kept after the method of Boswell, Johnson's ideal biographer. Everything that transpired, great and small, was recorded, so that the reader is introduced to Mr. Williams in every possible capacity. The trustees paid for his hat—"a beaver hat"—for his cloak, for his trunk, for his physician, his barber's bill, his letter-postage, and for his horse-keeping. The bills for these necessities were sent to the trustees, and thus came to be recorded in the

book. These accounts parallel in method those kept by the early Congregational churches of New England, where the number of glasses of liquor drunk by some of the installing councils are recorded in connection with the names of the persons who drank them.

There is extant, in Williams's handwriting, a "love-feast ticket" dated October 1, 1769. It was one of the first given in this country, and, according to a tradition in the family, the figures represent the number of members of the society at that date.

"Psalm 147. 11. Oct. 1. 1769.

"The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him: in those that hope in his mercy.

"HANNAH DEAN.

"75.

"ROBT. WILLIAMS.

"N. York."

An entry in Wesley's "Journal," under date of Friday, October 14, 1768 (vol. iv., p. 293), illustrates the catholicity of the Methodist movement, the conglomerate character of the first settlers of this country, and the fraternity which existed between evangelical Christians: "I dined with Dr. Wrangel, one of the king of Sweden's chaplains, who has spent several years in Pennsylvania [who had been engaged in preaching to Swedish Americans]. His heart seemed to be greatly united to the American Christians; and he strongly appealed for sending some of our preachers to help them, multitudes of whom are as sheep without a shepherd."

In the "Journal" of John Wesley<sup>1</sup> the twenty-sixth conference, at Leeds, is mentioned under date of August

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv., p. 312, American edition.

1st, and part of the record runs: "On Thursday I mentioned the case of our brethren in New York, who had built the first Methodist preaching-house in America, and were in great want of money, and much more of preachers. Two of our preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, willingly offered themselves for the service; by whom we determined to send them fifty pounds, as a token of our brotherly love."

Richard Boardman was a native of Ireland, thirty-one years of age, and for six years had been employed by Wesley as a traveling preacher. Joseph Pilmoor at sixteen had been converted by the preaching of Wesley, and was educated by him at the Kingswood school; after his admission to the conference he had traveled four years in Cornwall and Wales.

Wesley gave them twenty pounds for their passage, and within two weeks after their appointment they were ready to sail. Notwithstanding they had taken the advice of Mr. Taylor as to the time of sailing, the voyage lasted nine weeks, and it was not until October 21st that they landed at the village of Gloucester Point, on the Delaware, six miles below Philadelphia.

Dr. Wrangel, the Swedish missionary, had written to Philadelphia that Wesley had appointed two missionaries, and they were welcomed by the society and Captain Webb. Pilmoor began his mission in the United States without delay, preaching from the steps of the old State House on Chestnut Street. Ten days later he addressed the following letter to Wesley:

"PHILADELPHIA, October 31, 1789.

"REV. SIR: By the blessing of God we are safely arrived here, after a tedious passage of nine weeks. We were not a little surprised to find Captain Webb in town,

and a society of about one hundred members, who desire to be in close connection with you. 'This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.'

"I have preached several times, and the people flock to hear in multitudes. Sunday evening I went out upon the common. I had the stage appointed for the horse-race for my pulpit, and I think between four and five thousand hearers, who heard with attention still as night. Blessed be God for field-preaching! When I began to talk of preaching at five o'clock in the morning the people thought it would not answer in America; however, I resolved to try, and I had a very good congregation."<sup>1</sup>

Boardman, after preaching several times to increasing congregations, journeyed on horseback to New York. Passing a barrack—supposed to have been in Trenton—he inquired of a soldier if there were any Methodists there, and was answered, "Yes, we are all Methodists; that is, we would be glad to hear a Methodist preach." A Presbyterian church was secured, and the ringing of the bell at an unusual hour called together a large concourse, to whom an impressive sermon was preached, the effect of which was permanent, though attended with considerable excitement at the time, on account of the unusual circumstances.

Boardman began his mission in New York in the John Street Church. On the 4th of November he wrote to Wesley that only a third part of those who attended could obtain entrance, the rest being glad to hear from without. This letter states that the church contained "about 1700 people." This is undoubtedly a typographical error for 700. A remarkable sentence in the letter is: 'Oh, may the Most High now give his Son the heathen for his inheritance!

<sup>1</sup> Bangs, vol. i., p. 62.

The number of blacks that attend the preaching affects me much."

Boardman usually preached four times a week, and met the society on Wednesday night. He was allowed his board, and for clothes sixty dollars a year, paid quarterly. Early in his ministry John Mann was converted, and became a preacher of wide usefulness.

A peculiar method was adopted by Boardman and Pilmoor in distributing their labors. Three times a year—in the spring, summer, and autumn—they exchanged between Philadelphia and New York, the winter term lasting five months. From both these cities in the beginning they made long excursions.

Whitefield arrived in Philadelphia the last day of November, 1769, and gave his blessing to Boardman and Pilmoor. Less than one year afterward he died of asthma in Newburyport, having preached his last sermon at Exeter, N. H., where, carried away by his emotions, he prolonged his discourse through two hours. "It was the last of that series of mighty sermons which had been ringing like trumpet-blasts for thirty years over England and America." At Newburyport the people gathered about the house just as he was attempting to ascend to his chamber. Exhausted as he was, his heart went out toward them, and, pausing on the stairs, he exhorted them. "His voice, never, perhaps, surpassed in its music and pathos, flowed on till the candle which he held in his hand burned away and went out in the socket. The next morning he was not, for God had taken him." To him while time shall last must be given the credit of introducing the spirit of Methodism into the New World. Wondrously did he prepare the way for Wesley's missionaries.

Pilmoor reported to Wesley in the spring of 1770 that

in New York the pious of most congregations came to hear them; that the religion of Jesus had become a favorite topic in that city; that the society consisted of about a hundred members besides probationers; that Boardman and himself could not go much into the country, as they had more work in the cities than they were able to perform. He called for two more brethren, assuring Wesley that "they need not be afraid of wanting the comforts of life; for the people are very hospitable and kind." He added that when he and Mr. Boardman came they put themselves and the brethren to great expense, but the situation was different, and now everything necessary was provided.

Robert Williams by this time had gone South and was coöperating with Strawbridge. John King came from London to America late in 1769, and his connection with the Methodists appears to have been made with the society in Philadelphia, where he declared that he had been called of God to preach the gospel. As he had no license from Wesley, nor any recommendation from the preachers in England, Lee informs us that he could not be admitted. Undaunted, however, he set up an appointment for himself in the potter's field, where members of the society heard him; and being convinced that he was sincere, able, and zealous, they induced Pilmoor to allow him to preach a trial sermon, after which he was licensed and sent to Wilmington, Del., "to exhort among a few people who were earnestly seeking the Lord."

He proceeded to Maryland, where marked success attended his labors in 1770. In a sermon at the Forks of Gunpowder, in Baltimore County, men of decided character were converted, among them James J. Baker, who organized a class and opened his house for the entertainment of preachers and for worship. Later the third Methodist chapel in Maryland was erected upon his estate.

One of his sons, who occupied an official position in Baltimore, was the first convert of King's ministry in that city. His first pulpit was a blacksmith's block in the street; his next, a table. That occasion being a militia training-day, a drunken crowd upset the table and threw him down; but the commander of the troops restored order, and King preached so powerfully that he was invited to speak in St. Paul's Church. Like the founder of Methodism under similar circumstances, "he improved that opportunity with such fervor as to receive no repetition of the courtesy." The record is that he used his stentorian voice to its utmost capacity; that "he made the dust to fly from the old velvet cushion." Wesley wrote to him: "Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me, whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can, but do not scream. Speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, 'He shall not cry;' the word properly means he shall not *scream*. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud, often vehemently, but I never scream. I never strain myself; I dare not; I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. . . . Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others surely you might take it from your affectionate brother."

Notwithstanding Pilmoor's statement to Wesley that he and his colleague were chiefly confined to the cities, within a year the pressing calls for help led him out into the country. In the summer of 1770 he was aiding Strawbridge, Owen, King, and Williams in Maryland.

There is no reference to America in Wesley's lists of appointments until 1770, when the names of Pilmoor, Boardman, Williams, and John King appear. Captain Webb was still in the colonies, continually appealing to

Wesley for more preachers. In 1771 they reported three hundred and sixteen members. Wesley, though in a sea of troubles growing out of the separation of the Calvinists from the Arminians, said to the conference: "Our brethren in America call aloud for help. Who are willing to go over to help them?" Five offered, of whom but two could be spared.

Francis Asbury was one of these, son of an English farmer and gardener, whose wife, a diligent reader, having lost her daughter, became intensely religious, training her remaining child as only a pious mother who had centered all her affection upon a son could do. When but seven years of age he was an interested reader of the Bible. At thirteen and a half he began to learn a trade. Before he was fourteen he was awakened by the conversation of a man not a Methodist, and had the opportunity of listening to the noted Calvinistic Methodists, and of reading their books, especially the sermons of Whitefield. Wherever the Methodists appeared, whether Arminian or Calvinistic, their preaching was the innocent occasion of inciting violence, which increased to such an extent as to place "the whole region in a state little short of civil war." "Broken relics of ruined furniture are still kept in Methodist families of the county [Staffordshire] as sacred mementos of those days of the fiery trial of their fathers."<sup>1</sup>

Francis Asbury went to Wednesbury to attend their services, where he was surprised to hear prayers and sermons delivered without notes or books, and was impressed by the devotion of the people. He fell under deep conviction, and when praying with a companion in his father's barn he had an experience which he records in these words: "I believe that the Lord pardoned my sins and justified my soul."

<sup>1</sup> Stevens.



He began to hold meetings, led a class, then preached, but, because of diffidence, it was some months after he preached before he publicly prayed in Methodist meeting-houses. His intelligence, fidelity, and zeal being manifest to all, he was licensed as a local preacher, and after acting for some years in that capacity while pursuing his business, when he was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age he consecrated himself wholly to God and his work.

He had never left his ministerial work to attend the Annual Conference during the five years that he had been a traveling preacher, but had been thinking two months before this session "that America was destined to be his field of labor."

Wesley discerned in him qualities eminently fitted for leadership. His parents, though sorrowing on account of the parting, did not oppose his going, his mother especially recognizing the hand of God. He sailed from Bristol on the 4th of September, 1771, the money for his expenses having been provided by Methodists, who gave him clothes and ten pounds. He preached as often as possible on the voyage, and spent his leisure time "in prayer, retirement, and reading."<sup>1</sup> The books that Asbury was reading were Sellon's "Answer to Elisha Cole on the Sovereignty of God," Mr. De Renty's Life, part of Mr. Norris's Works, Mr. Edwards on "The Work of God in New England," "Pilgrim's Progress," the Bible, Mr. Wesley's "Sermons," and Fletcher's "Appeals." Richard Wright, his companion, was comparatively unknown, and had been in the ministry but one year. They reached Philadelphia, October 27th, after more than fifty days of tossing on the sea.

Dr. Bangs estimates that at this date there were about

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal."

six hundred Methodists in the colonies, and at least ten preachers besides Wesley's missionaries.

The night after Asbury's arrival in Philadelphia he attended service and listened to Pilmoor, who preached in an edifice still in existence, which was built by a German Reformed society and sold in 1770 to Miles Pennington, one of the members of the class formed by Captain Webb two years previously. Though Asbury does not speak specifically of preaching, he says: "I felt my mind opened to the people and my tongue loosed to speak." A watch-night service was held November 4th. Pilmoor preached, and "very few left the solemn place till the conclusion. Toward the end a plain man spoke, who came out of the country, and his words went with great power to the souls of the people."

That Asbury had preached several times is to be inferred from the fact that when about to set out for New York he records that he preached at Philadelphia his last sermon, November 6th, and adds that "this also was a night of power to my own and many other souls."

He preached in the court-house, in Burlington, N. J., and on the way thither met with "one P. Van Pelt," who had heard him preach in Philadelphia, and invited him to accompany him to his house on Staten Island, where he preached, reaching New York on Monday, the 12th. Here he met Richard Boardman, who was not well, and after consultation, having doubtless had an understanding to that effect with Wesley, Asbury assumed the practical control of the work; and his "Journal" recounts the exercise of the energy, decision, and method which characterized his subsequent work. He expresses regret that both he and Boardman should remain in New York; affirms that he had not yet the thing which he sought—a circulation of preachers to avoid popularity and partiality; that he ex-

pected trouble; that the brethren seemed unwilling to leave the cities, but he would set the example; that he was determined that no man should bias him with soft words and fair speeches.

He went to Westchester on the 24th, twenty miles from New York, and was permitted by the mayor to preach in the court-house, which he did morning and afternoon, conducting a meeting at West Farms in the evening.

The strong affection existing between Methodists at that early day led to singular entries in "Asbury's Journal." November 7th, in Philadelphia, he met Peter Van Pelt for the first time. Less than two months afterward he records: "From this I went to my old friend V. P.'s, who received me with his former kindness."

From the time of his arrival in this country Francis Asbury seemed to be singularly liable to various forms of disease, and his "Journal" abounds with descriptions of numerous attacks, and of the medical treatment to which he was subjected. He traveled and preached constantly, having exciting adventures. Wherever there was a jail he visited it, preaching when permitted. Reactions from extreme Calvinism were among the principal impediments he had to encounter among the intelligent. The Friends treated him kindly, as did many of the Presbyterians. On a certain Friday he "dined with Mr. R., who cannot keep negroes for conscience' sake."

Though courageous, occasionally a man-fearing spirit paralyzed him. Of such a case he says, "I have nothing to plead to palliate my omission of prayer," and implores the forgiveness of God. Whenever possible he preached on the occasion of executions. At Chester, Pa., when four prisoners were to be hanged, John King preached and Asbury prayed.

After extended tours in the Middle States he met Captain Webb and Mr. Boardman in Philadelphia. Boardman was nominally superintendent, and prepared a plan of labor covering several succeeding months: Boardman was to go east as far as Boston, Pilmoor to Virginia, Richard Wright to New York, and Asbury to remain three months in the vicinity of Philadelphia. By these means it was proposed to distribute the labors of seven preachers over as many hundred miles. Asbury methodically arranged his routes over a circuit having Philadelphia as the center, and reaching as far northward as Trenton, N. J. Three months later the plan was reconstructed by Boardman, who located himself in Philadelphia and Asbury in New York.

Scarcely an event of importance occurred without Asbury's availing himself of the occasion. He preached two or three times every day, and yet often accused himself of a lack of zeal, and blamed his spiritual condition for a want of life when his bodily strength was exhausted or weakened by disease. Sometimes he recognized the cause of his depression, as appears from this entry: "My mind was greatly depressed. Not on account of any outward, known sin; but partly from the state of my body, and partly from the deep sense of the very great work in which I am employed."

In December of the same year, while in Kent County, he urged Robert Williams to proceed to Virginia, and Pilmoor to penetrate as far south as possible. Among other important centers which the latter reached was Savannah, and the descendants of those whom he led to Christ are to this day in active coöperation with Methodism.

On the 10th of October, 1772, Asbury received a letter from Wesley appointing him "assistant or superintendent." Wesley's method in England was to call the cir-

cuit preachers helpers, and the superintendents of circuits, assistants.

While he was in Kent County a minister of the Church of England demanded by what authority he preached. Asbury informed him that he was one of Mr. Wesley's preachers. Said the clergyman: "I have the sole authority over this people, and the care of their souls, and you can not and shall not preach; if you do I will proceed against you according to law." Asbury with dignity informed him that he had no respect for his assumed authority; that he came there to preach, and should do so. Said the clergyman, "You will create a schism and draw the people from their work." "Do not fairs and horse-races hinder the people?" said Asbury. Then said the clergyman, "What is the real object of your coming?" "To turn sinners to God." "Cannot I do this as well as you?" asked the parson. Asbury then solemnly declared, "I have authority from God;" and added, "I do not preach to invalidate your authority, and I do not wish to dispute with you." But he told Asbury that he had business with him, and became violently enraged. Asbury then began the meeting, and urged the people to repent. The parson remained to hear him, but at the conclusion said to those present that they did wrong in attending. Thus records Asbury: "He said I spoke against learning, whereas I only spoke to this purpose—when a man turns from all sin, he will adorn every character in life, both in church and state."<sup>1</sup>

Numerous conversions followed his preaching, as well as that of his colleagues, and the results are well described by Asbury, who never fails to give due credit to those who had preceded him: "The Lord hath done great things for these people, notwithstanding the weakness of the in-

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 55.

struments and some little irregularities. Men who neither feared God nor regarded man—swearers, liars, cock-fighters, card-players, horse-racers, drunkards, etc.—are now so changed as to become new men; and they are filled with the praises of God. This is the Lord's work; and it is marvelous in our eyes. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."<sup>1</sup>

Returning from the South in company with John King, and passing among the societies which had been formed on the western shore, he crossed and recrossed the Susquehanna River, coming in Christmas week to the residence of J. Presbury. There he held the first Quarterly Conference of which there is any account. After a sermon the following propositions were considered:

"1. What are our collections? (We find them sufficient to defray our expenses.)

"2. How are our preachers stationed? (Here follow the assignments of Strawbridge, Owen, King, Webster, Rawlings, and Asbury.)

"3. Shall we be strict in our society meetings and not admit strangers? (Agreed.)

"4. Shall we drop preaching in the daytime through the week? (Not agreed to.)

"5. Will the people be contented without our administering the sacrament? (John King was neuter, Strawbridge pleaded much for the ordinances, and so did the people, who appeared to be much biased by him. Asbury says that he would not agree to it, but Mr. Boardman had yielded to them at a previous quarterly meeting, and that he was obliged to connive at some things for the sake of peace.)"

Other discussions related to the collections to pay the board and expenses of preachers. Asbury states that they

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 49.

examined carefully into the moral character of the preachers and exhorters, and found all what they should be, except one exhorter, and of him "they had great hopes." Strawbridge received forty dollars "quarterage," Asbury and King thirty dollars each.

Asbury now began to record his criticisms of the various preachers, and as he was candid in expressing his opinion in conversation with those concerned, the educational effect of his advice upon the infant church was of incalculable value. Of William Watters he said: "He spoke with great care, but with little depth. He may improve and make a useful preacher in time." "I heard Isaac Rawlings exhort. His exhortation was coarse and loud enough, though with some depth. I gave him a little advice, which he seemed willing to take."<sup>1</sup>

Asbury, at the beginning of 1773, made his headquarters in Baltimore. For some time after the first preacher lifted up his voice in Baltimore there had been no disposition on the part of people generally to open their houses for Methodist meetings or to entertain the preachers. Most of the sermons had been delivered in the market-house, or on street corners, and the preachers had lodged at taverns or in the country, where adherents were more numerous. Matters in this respect had begun to improve when Asbury arrived, for many converts from the country had moved to the city, and the conviction had grown that Methodism was to be permanently established. Captain Patten, an Irishman, was the first citizen to open his house for the preaching of Asbury.

A sail-loft had been secured for public services, but Methodism had been without a responsible head. Asbury proceeded to "settle the classes," and to establish the order

<sup>1</sup> Proper names in those early times were spelled variously. This man's appears as in "Asbury's Journal," and as Rollin, Rawlins, and Rollins.

and certainty that characterized all institutions founded by John Wesley. Though some chafed under the rigor of the administration, prosperity continued until soon it was necessary to erect a church. This led to the purchase of a lot sixty by seventy-five feet, on the corner of Strawberry Alley and Fleet Street, on which a meeting-house was begun November 17, 1773. Two lots were purchased and a church commenced in Lovely Lane, April 18, 1774. According to Dr. Hamilton,<sup>1</sup> it is uncertain which was first finished.

Asbury formed for himself a circuit including Baltimore and extending over six counties. It comprised twenty-four appointments, and he traversed it once in three weeks, preaching, exhorting, classifying, and holding quarterly meetings.

Robert Williams was the apostle of Methodism in Virginia. He opened his commission in Norfolk, where he preached with such energy and fire that he was supposed to be insane, and the people were afraid of him; but after his second sermon, their hearts became deeply touched, and they received him into their houses.

He was aided by the Rev. Devereaux Jarratt, an Episcopal clergyman, who wrote an account of the revival in Sussex and Brunswick counties, in which he commended the labors of Williams and others. Jarratt, like Wesley, formed the converts into a society, and while he acknowledged the value of the labors of the Methodists to him, they have gratefully remembered and in all their histories recorded his kindness to them. Williams was equally effective in North Carolina.

The manner in which Asbury dealt with men individually must not be overlooked in an exposition of the elements which gave early Methodism its power. In the

<sup>1</sup> In the "Methodist Quarterly Review" for 1856.



account of his travels through "the Jerseys," he says: "I met with W. B., a man who has a great regard for us, but seems to be too much taken up with worldly cares. But speaking faithfully and closely to him, I showed him the deceitfulness of riches in producing a spirit of independence toward God, hardness of heart, and pride in its various forms, while they promise us safety and happiness."

Following the example and precept of Wesley, Asbury went to the Established Church for the sacraments, and encouraged his converts to do likewise. Frequently the Methodists were insulted by unsympathizing clergymen. In Burlington, N. J., he went to the church in order to receive the sacrament. As he was a man of distinguished presence, and by this time well known, the parson gave a strange discourse "full of inconsistency and raillery." "Leaving him to answer for his own conduct, [Asbury] took no further notice of it, but preached at night from these words: 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,' and showed first what the things of the Spirit of God are; secondly, described the natural man; and thirdly, showed how they appear to be foolishness to him, and that he cannot know them by the strength of his intellect or acquired abilities." As usual, the tirades of clerical opponents reacted in favor of those whom they endeavored to discredit.

The sky was not everywhere bright. Some of Asbury's colleagues were restless under his strong hand. Richard Wright, Joseph Pilmoor, and others had written to him in a severe tone. Asbury had explained to Wesley the necessity of discipline and of more laborers, imploring him to come himself, and Wesley seems to have contemplated a visit in order that he might understand the true state of things; for Asbury<sup>1</sup> states that he received a letter from

<sup>1</sup> "Journal," May 6, 1773, vol. i., p. 72.

Wesley informing him that the time of his coming over to America "is not yet."

Captain Webb had gone to England in 1772, after six years' labor in the United States. Wesley heard him, and the captain attended the conference at Leeds, where he urged the appointment of the best men to America.

Thomas Rankin and George Shadford were sent over. The former was a Scotchman, converted under the preaching of George Whitefield, but afterward, hearing John Wesley and Alexander Mather, became a local preacher, and in 1761 an itinerant of rare energy and marked success. For ten years he had encountered opposition, administered Wesleyan discipline with tact and vigor, and preached with impressiveness, increasing and consolidating the societies wherever he went. Among his converts was a curate of the English church.

Mr. Wesley appointed him superintendent of the entire work of Methodism in America, and Rankin chose as his companion Shadford, who had been a soldier, whom he thus describes: "My much-esteemed friend and brother, whose uprightness, piety, and usefulness I had proved on several circuits."

There is nothing in the records of early Methodism which exhibits the sublimity of the conceptions of John Wesley concerning the work and his relation to it more dramatically than his letter to George Shadford:<sup>1</sup>

"DEAR GEORGE: The time is arrived for you to embark for America. You must go down to Bristol, where you will meet with T. Rankin, Captain Webb, and his wife.

"I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can. I am, dear George,

"Yours affectionately,

"JOHN WESLEY."

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's Works, vol. vii., pp. 99, 100.

They sailed on Good Friday, April 9, 1773, accompanied by Joseph Yearbry, an English local preacher.

These two missionaries landed in Philadelphia on the third day of June, and immediately commenced work. When Asbury, on the night after their arrival, heard Rankin from the text, "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it," he wrote: "He will not be admired as a preacher; but as a disciplinarian he will fill his place." Subsequently his entries were more favorable.

Rankin and Asbury arrived in New York the 12th of June, where on the next morning the latter preached. Rankin found so many indications of trouble that he was cast down, but during the preaching of Asbury was much comforted. The text, Ruth ii. 4, "Behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee," used in the spiritualizing method then common, suggested a sermon of singular appropriateness. In the afternoon, Rankin, Asbury, Captain Webb, and Wright went to St. Paul's Church and received the sacrament. During the week they separated, Webb going to Albany and Asbury to New Rochelle, where he remained some time, preaching every day and three times on Sunday. On his return to New York on the 23d he found Rankin had been "well employed in settling matters pertaining to the society."

A revival of religion was in progress, characterized by manifestations of fervor and epidemic excitement so unusual that Rankin thought them extravagant. An issue was raised upon this point, the effects of which were far-reaching. When he came to this country, Asbury left prejudices and prepossessions behind, determining thoroughly to identify himself with the people and their institutions. Rankin's ideas of loyalty and government were exhibited in two forms: he magnified authority until those who

thought that Asbury's hand was of iron (though in general he endeavored to prevail by conciliating and compromising wherever principle was not involved) found that Rankin to be steel. Their differences upon the subject of revivals is well stated by Strickland: "Rankin manifested an opposition to the spirit of revivals, asserting that they tended to disgrace religion by the destruction of order. In this he was promptly met by Asbury, who, although he conceded that some enthusiasm and extravagance might occasionally exist in time of revival, yet deemed it injudicious to animadvert with severity on those exhibitions of passionate excitement which more or less accompanied deep and lasting revivals of religion."<sup>1</sup>

While Rankin remained in New York, Shadford had spent a month in New Jersey, adding thirty-five to the societies.

<sup>1</sup> "Life and Times of Francis Asbury," p. 100.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EARLY AMERICAN CONFERENCES.

ON the 11th of July, 1773, Asbury left New York for Philadelphia, Rankin meanwhile having called together the preachers for conference. Philadelphia, which was destined to become famous as the seat of the first Continental Congress, now had a privilege which even those inclined to despise the day of small things considered an honor—that of entertaining the first American Methodist conference.

Asbury's and Rankin's journals settle the date as July 14th; yet, as Dr. Stevens remarks, it is surprising how many errors regarding this important event have appeared in subsequent records. Bangs in his history gives July 4th, and that was Sunday. The "Life of William Waters," the first American preacher, assigns the date to June, without day, and Wakeley's "Lost Chapters" to July 16th.

Asbury did not appear at the conference till the second day. His arrival increased the number present to ten, which was the number in attendance upon Wesley's first conference in England, twenty-nine years before. Those present were all Europeans.<sup>1</sup>

This being the first of the conferences of which hundreds

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Rankin, Francis Asbury, Richard Boardman, Joseph Pilmoor, Richard Wright, George Shadford, Captain Thomas Webb, John King, Abraham Whitworth, and Joseph Yearbry.

are now held every year, the minutes constitute a document essential to those who would trace the evolution of American Methodism as an ecclesiastical organization.

*“ Minutes of Some Conversations between the Preachers in Connection with the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Philadelphia, June, 1773.*

“ The following queries were proposed to every preacher :

“ 1. Ought not the authority of Mr. Wesley and that Conference to extend to the preachers and people in America as well as in Great Britain and Ireland?

“ *Ans.* Yes.

“ 2. Ought not the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the minutes, to be the sole rule of our conduct, who labor in the connection with Mr. Wesley in America?

“ *Ans.* Yes.

“ 3. If so, does it not follow that if any preachers deviate from the Minutes we can have no fellowship with them till they change their conduct?

“ *Ans.* Yes.

“ The following rules were agreed to by all the preachers present :

“ 1. Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labor in America is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

“ 2. All the people among whom we labor to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church and receive the ordinances there ; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute.

“ 3. No person or persons to be admitted into our love-

feasts oftener than twice or thrice unless they become members; and none to be admitted to the society meetings more than thrice.

" 4. None of the preachers in America to reprint any of Mr. Wesley's books without his authority (when it can be gotten) and the consent of their brethren.

" 5. Robert Williams to sell the books he has already printed, but to print no more unless under the above restrictions.

" 6. Every preacher who acts as an assistant to send an account of the work once in six months to the General Assistant.

" *Question 1.* How are the preachers stationed?

" New York, Thomas Rankin, to change in four months.

" Philadelphia, George Shadford, to change in four months.

" New Jersey, John King, William Watters.<sup>1</sup>

" Baltimore, Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge,<sup>1</sup> Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry.

" Norfolk, Richard Wright.

" Petersburg, Robert Williams.<sup>1</sup>

" *Ques. 2.* What numbers are there in the Society?

" New York . . . . . 180

" Philadelphia . . . . . 180

" New Jersey . . . . . 200

" Maryland . . . . . 500

" Virginia . . . . . 100

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1160

" Preachers . . . . . 10 "

At that time the Methodists in America regarded themselves as much under the direction of Wesley as did those

<sup>1</sup> Not present.

in Europe, relying upon him to send them preachers, and such directions as he might deem necessary. The preachers whom he sent agreed to submit to his authority, to adhere to his doctrine, and to establish the same discipline by which the Society in England was governed. The best defense of this attitude, unanswerable from every point of view, is in Lee's "History of the Methodists" (p. 47):

"We were only a religious society, and not a church; and any member of any church, who would conform to our rules and meet in a class, had liberty to continue in their own church. But as most of our society had been brought up in the Church of England (so called), and especially those of Maryland and Virginia, it was recommended to them to attend on the service of that church, and to partake of the ordinances at the hands of the ministers; for at that time the church people were established by law in Maryland and Virginia, and the ministers were supported by a tax on the people. In many places for a hundred miles together there was no one to baptize a child except a minister of the Established Church."

The rule relating to Robert Williams may be considered "the initial step in the establishment of one of the great institutions of Methodism."<sup>1</sup> Lee states that Williams had reprinted, in small pamphlets, many of Wesley's books and sermons, and had circulated them to the great advantage of the movement, distributing them in advance, so that preachers were invited by those who had read them to preach where they had never been heard. Lee further states: "It now became necessary for all the preachers to be united in the same cause of printing and selling our books, so that the profits arising therefrom might be divided among them or applied to some charitable purpose." This harmonized with the method on the other side of the

<sup>1</sup> The Methodist Book Concern.



Atlantic, where Wesley had the exclusive control of publications in the interest of Methodism, appropriating the income thereof to its support and extension.

Those who suppose that in early Methodism human nature was extinguished by divine grace, to be undeceived need only to read "Asbury's Journal," which records that in this conference there were debates "relative to the conduct of some who had manifested a desire to abide in the cities and live like gentlemen, and that when three years out of four had been already spent in the city. Money had been wasted, improper leaders appointed, many of our rules broken."

The number of members above given includes only those who were classified. The preachers had been unable to apply Wesley's method on account of the resistance of the laymen, and some preachers sympathized with them. Almost all that had been accomplished was the result of the strenuous efforts and persuasion of Asbury. Rankin reported to Wesley that nowhere was the discipline properly attended to, except in Philadelphia and New York, and even there it was declining.

Rankin remained a few days in Philadelphia, having the assistance of Pilmoor, and then proceeded to New York, where he was aided at different times by Pilmoor and Boardman. Being General Assistant, and having the care of all the societies in America, while nominally stationed in New York, he was frequently away, always, however, securing the superintendence of the work in his absence. His diary shows that he met with extraordinary success and constantly communed with God. George Shadford was equally zealous and marvelously effective in preaching, and formed a most tender affection for Asbury, compared by a writer in the "Methodist Magazine" for 1816 to the love of David and Jonathan. At the end of

his first year in America, Shadford had added about two hundred to the society.

Asbury continued the work in the same spirit of self-denial and incessant labor which had characterized him from the time he arrived in the country. In Baltimore he became intimate with the Rev. Mr. Otterbein and the Rev. Mr. Swoop, pastor of the Lutheran Church; to these he expounded the plan of Methodism, and they decided to imitate Methodist methods as closely as possible.

Wright toiled faithfully in Virginia, and Williams wrought untiringly in that colony and North Carolina. Jarratt, the clergyman of the Church of England, continued to fraternize with Methodists, and was in a sense an American Fletcher, acting upon Methodist principles and imbued with its spirit, without relinquishing his parish. Among the converts made by these preachers were some who attained genuine distinction by usefulness and gained renown by eloquence.

When Asbury, returning from the conference to Baltimore, met Strawbridge, he explained to him the new and peculiar rule concerning the administration of the sacraments, and its special application to Maryland and Virginia. But Strawbridge, who had previously contended for the right of the people to the sacraments, and had administered them before Boardman or Pilmoor, Asbury or Rankin, had arrived in the country, would not comply; and Asbury always stated that the rule was adopted with the understanding that "no brother in our connection shall be permitted to administer the ordinances at this time except Mr. Strawbridge, and he under the particular direction of the assistant." He hoped that Strawbridge, at the first Quarterly Conference, would recognize the effort he had made to conciliate him, and submit to the rule as specially modified in his favor; but "he appeared to be inflexible,

and would not administer the ordinances under our direction at all.<sup>1</sup> Many things were said on the subject, and a few of the people took part with him."

Dissatisfaction was plainly and even warmly expressed. Asbury, obliged to exert his influence against the uncompromising spirit and rigid methods of Rankin, and the independent and insubordinate spirit of Strawbridge and those who sympathized with him, was adversely criticised by both extremes, until he was compelled to write, "My hand appeared still to be against every man."

Awakenings, conversions, numberless individual inquiries concerning the new way everywhere spoken against, resulting in widespread revivals and the opening of "effectual doors," rewarded the efforts of the small but devoted band that flung their banners to the breeze and turned not back during the rest of the year 1773 and the ensuing spring.

The second Annual Conference was held in Philadelphia, May 25, 1774. At the first but one question was asked concerning the ministers: "How are the preachers stationed?" and one concerning the members in the Society. At the second conference six were asked: "1. Who are admitted this year? 2. Who are admitted on trial? 3. Who are assistants this year?" The fourth is important: "Are there any objections to any of the preachers?" The record is, "They were examined one by one." According to these minutes, two that were stationed in 1773 are to be regarded as having been on trial—Joseph Yearbry and Abraham Whitworth. Under the first question appear two names new to the record, Philip Gatch and Philip Ebert, and the seven admitted on trial are also new. All not classified as "assistants" were known as "helpers." The whole number of preachers stationed was 17, and the

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 83.

number of members, 2073. Asbury was stationed in New York and Rankin in Philadelphia, to change in three months, and all preachers at the end of six months. The only business recorded related to the salaries of preachers, which were fixed at six pounds per quarter and their traveling expenses (Pennsylvania currency, about sixty-four dollars a year); but each preacher "received into full connection" was to have the use and property of his horse, which any of the circuits might furnish. A general Easter collection was ordered for sinking debts on chapels and relieving the preachers in want; and it was provided that "wherever Thomas Rankin spends his time he is to be assisted by those circuits."

Four new circuits had been formed. While Robert Williams is mentioned among the assistants, the minutes do not assign him a station, nor does the name of Robert Strawbridge appear.

Of this conference Asbury records: "The overbearing spirit of a certain person [Rankin] had excited my fears. My judgment was stubbornly opposed for a while, but at last submitted to; but it is my duty to bear all things with a meek and patient spirit. Our conference was attended with great power, and, all things considered, with great harmony."

Richard Wright, who had come over with Asbury, though efficient at intervals, had been a comparative failure in this country. Possessed of some gifts, he was spoiled by flattery, and then became unpopular because of the pride and self-seeking which were the natural results of such treatment. Asbury was inclined to sympathize with him, and noted in his "Journal," "the unfaithfulness of some who first spoil a man and then condemn him."

The conference agreed to send Wright back to England; but before he went Asbury visited him, and "found

he had no taste for spiritual subjects." Referring to this, he writes, "Lord, keep me from all superfluity of dress, and from preaching empty stuff to please the hearer instead of changing the heart! Thus has he fulfilled as a hireling his day." After his return to England he continued in the service of Wesley but three years, his subsequent career being unknown.

The names of Boardman and Pilmoor had not appeared in the list of those stationed for 1773, though they remained in the country nearly six months, preaching where they had opportunity and assisting at the principal centers. They were, however, Englishmen of the English, and the dark shadows of the coming events of the Revolution excited their apprehensions. On January 2, 1774, "after commending the Americans to God," they sailed for England.

Boardman immediately resumed work in Ireland, and continued therein until 1780, when he was appointed to London as an associate of Charles Wesley, Dr. Thomas Coke, and others. The next year he returned to Ireland and traveled upon the Limerick circuit, and in the following was appointed to Cork, where he was highly esteemed, and the people were anxious for his coming. His first sermon was from the text, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." He was unable to preach in the evening; but, though there were symptoms of approaching apoplexy, his physician neglected the case, and about nine o'clock the same day he died. Wesley, speaking of his sudden death, says, "It seems he might have been eminently useful; but good is the will of the Lord."

Pilmoor desisted from traveling in 1774. In 1776 he was appointed to London, and afterward, in succession, to the Norwich circuit, Edinburgh, Dublin, Nottingham, Edinburgh again, and York. In 1785 his name disap-

peared from the English minutes. He returned to America later, took orders in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and was settled in Philadelphia. In 1802 there was a division in the parish of Trinity Church, New York, one hundred and twenty-two desiring him as assistant minister. Their petition being disregarded, they seceded and organized a church on Ann Street, over which he was settled. Subsequently he removed to Philadelphia, and was rector of St. Paul's Church. He possessed superior abilities, and Methodistic fervor characterized him until death. The University of Pennsylvania conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Divinity.

William Watters, born in Baltimore County, Maryland, the son of strict members of the English church, was the first native Methodist preacher. He often heard Strawbridge, King, and Williams; was strongly impressed, lost interest in youthful amusements and society, passed days in great distress of mind; but in May, 1771, in the house where he was born, his sorrow fled, his prayers were turned into praise, and his experience was epitomized by himself in these words: "I could now, for the first time, call Jesus Christ Lord by the Holy Ghost given unto me." The reading of Wesley's sermons, in one of the pamphlets published by Williams, deepened his convictions. He adopted and definitely preached the doctrine of Christian perfection, popularly known as "entire sanctification," taught by Wesley, and professed the corresponding experience. Those who knew him best were most impressed with his sincerity, and he was the instrument of the conversion of two of his brothers, both of whom became preachers. Though not present at the first conference, he was among those stationed by it.

Philip Gatch, the second native Methodist preacher reported in the minutes, was a strong character, prone to

reflect upon religious questions, familiar with the writings of different sects and of the Established Church, in which he was born. Perigeau, a preacher raised up by Robert Strawbridge, preached the first Methodist sermon he ever heard, and "left a want in the heart of Gatch that for six weeks filled him with misery which other preachers did not alleviate." But on the 26th of April, 1772, he was emancipated from the spirit of condemnation. His father had threatened to drive him from home, and his elder brother sympathized with the proscription, but was converted, as were the parents, most of the other children, and several collateral members of the family. Gatch was an influential accession, and the head of a family still conspicuous in the United States. Such was his ability that John McLean, justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, who knew him well, thought himself well employed in writing his life.

Both Strawbridge and Williams appear to have located. Lindsay, one of those received on trial, was an Irishman, who remained in this country only three years. Dromgoole was likewise an Irishman, who had publicly renounced popery in 1770, in his native country.

The chief characteristic of the year 1774 was the marvelous success of Asbury in gathering into the societies influential families, from whose position and wealth Methodism, in the vicinity of Baltimore, gained material advantages, the value of which was enhanced by their spirituality and strict adherence to Methodist doctrine and discipline. The most conspicuous of these was Henry Dorsey Gough, who was in the enjoyment of a fortune of more than three hundred thousand dollars. His wife was a daughter of Governor Ridgeley, and his country residence, known as Perry Hall, about twelve miles from Baltimore, was "one of the most conspicuous and elegant in Amer-

ica." His wife was deeply stirred by Methodist preaching, but he denounced it as superstition and forbade her to hear it again; but he was disquieted, and sought relief in wine and gay and irreligious companions. It was proposed that for sport they should hear Asbury. But he possessed a power to solemnize an assembly surpassed only by Wesley, and as they were departing, one of his friends said to Gough, "What nonsense!" "No," replied he, "it is the truth; the truth as it is in Jesus." Entering his house, he said to his wife, "I will never again hinder you from hearing the Methodists." His seriousness increased until he was upon the verge of suicide. Visiting one of his plantations, he heard the voice of prayer and praise in a cabin, and found that a slave from a neighboring plantation was engaged in prayer with his own negroes, "and offering fervent thanksgivings for the blessings of their depressed lot." He was moved to the depths, and cried out: "Alas, O Lord, I have my thousands and tens of thousands, and yet, ungrateful wretch that I am, I never thanked thee as this poor slave does, who has scarcely clothes to put on or food to satisfy his hunger." A few days later he left the dinner-table and went to his room, determined to find peace if possible. Receiving the assurance of forgiveness, he returned to his family and guests, exclaiming, "I have found the Methodists' blessing! I have found the Methodists' God!"

As his establishment comprised one hundred persons, he erected a chapel near his residence. It was the first American Methodist church possessing a bell, and every morning and evening his household and slaves were summoned to family worship. Twice a month the circuit preachers visited it, and local preachers every Sunday.

During this year Abraham Whitworth, the first conspicuous apostate among American Methodists, fell into in-



temperance and other vices. He had been sent to Kent circuit, and after his lapse Gatch was directed to take his place. His triumphs there were extraordinary; though persecuted, often with violence, every event seemed to contribute to his success. Men who became preachers of unusual ability were converted under his appeals. Kain, a clergyman of the Church of England, and one of his chief opponents, was in the habit of encountering Methodist preachers, demanding their authority, and arrogantly catechising them concerning their qualifications. When he accosted Gatch, the latter informed him that he was about to preach and he could judge for himself. Gatch knew much of the Prayer-book by heart and quoted it frequently to confirm his position; Kain was embarrassed, but at the close, under great excitement, endeavored to read the interview with Nicodemus to prove that baptism by water was necessary and not the new birth. He condemned extempore prayer, and denounced Gatch for not using a written form. The latter rose and gave his experience, declaring that, though he had been baptized in infancy, until the time of his conversion he had never felt the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit. He adduced various Scripture instances of extempore prayer, and remarked that "when Peter was sinking he did not go ashore to get a prayer-book, but cried out, 'Save, Lord, or I perish!'"

Portentous complications long existing were about to culminate. Thus far the colonies had had no direct political connection with one another. New Hampshire, New Jersey, Virginia, the two Carolinas, and Georgia were under provincial governments, based on commissions issued to governors appointed by the crown, and limited by the accompanying instructions. Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware were under proprietors, to whom

had been granted the subordinate powers of legislation and government, and by whom the governor was appointed. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut were chartered governments, the charters being similar, in many respects, to the commissions issued to the provincial governors.

Because of a universal sympathy, community of interest arose between the colonies when Parliament struck a blow at the chartered governments; for, notwithstanding existing dissimilarities, the attempt to alter the charter of Massachusetts alarmed the other colonies, since, if Parliament had that right, none possessed any constitutional guarantees which could not be altered or taken away by its caprice. An act passed in 1774, for the better regulating of the government of the province of Massachusetts Bay, radically changed the executive power, and reconstructed the judiciary in order to subdue the people more completely to the crown. As early as 1754, twenty-five commissioners had assembled from seven States, and a plan of union was adopted, principally the work of Benjamin Franklin. All agreed that an act of Parliament was necessary to authorize it; but it was rejected by every colonial assembly before which it was brought, for they considered that it implied too much of prerogative; and it was rejected in England on the ground that it was too democratic.<sup>1</sup>

The Stamp Act, passed a year before Philip Embury began to preach, led several of the colonies to deny the right of taxation by Parliament, and when, in 1766, it was repealed, the news caused general satisfaction, which was manifested by fireworks, festivals, and the ringing of bells. But in the act of repeal the government reasserted its right

<sup>1</sup> Curtis's "Origin and History of the Constitution of the United States," vol. i., pp. 8-10 (Harper Brothers).

to tax the colonies, and in 1767 imposed a duty on paper, glass, painters' colors, and teas imported into the colonies. The chief merchants of Boston, Salem, Connecticut, and New York agreed, in 1768, not to purchase or import, during the whole of the next year, any kind of goods or merchandise from Great Britain except a few specified articles. Boston was practically transformed into a garrisoned town because of the large number of British soldiers stationed there to protect the revenue officers in the collection of duties.

The advance mutterings of a distant but swiftly approaching storm were in the air during the whole of 1773. For two years, when the colonial assemblies met they began business by denouncing the acts of the British ministry; promptly the governors would prorogue them, leaving the people destitute of respect for the government and hostile to the governor personally. But now, before the governors could find an excuse for putting an end to the session, the assemblies constituted "committees of correspondence," to arrange for and maintain concert of action among the colonies. Opposition to taxation had been so effective that in 1772, while the collection of revenue on tea produced about eighty pounds net, it cost more than two hundred thousand to collect it. Then came the scheme by which, although the East India Company was given a drawback of the entire amount of the duty, the people, while yielding the principle and paying the tax, were to get tea at a lower price than any other people, and at less cost than before the duty was imposed. But the colonies would not be bribed. Popular indignation meetings were held in New York and Philadelphia, the captains were ordered to take the tea back, and many of them obeyed. In Charleston, S. C., it was stored in cellars, where it spoiled; in Boston, after long discussion, it was, on December 16th, thrown

into the sea. Thus the whole continent, excluding Canada and the French and Spanish possessions, was in a state of excitement.

The arrogance and oppressions of the mother country constantly increased until, less than four weeks after the adjournment of the first American Methodist conference, Benjamin Franklin, then in England as the political agent of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Georgia, wrote an official letter to the Massachusetts Assembly, dated July 7, 1773, recommending the assembling of a general congress of the colonies. That body, styling itself "delegates appointed by the good people of these colonies," convened in Philadelphia, September 5, 1774. The Congress did not propose revolution, but regarded itself as the guardian of the rights and liberties of the colonies, and adopted a declaration of rights, in which were summed up the hardships suffered since the year 1763, and the claim was made of a free and exclusive power of legislation independent of parliamentary jurisdiction in all cases of taxation and internal polity, subject only to the negative of the crown. The declaration also maintained that the colonies were entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural-born subjects within the realm of England, the right to trial by jury of the vicinage, and to assemble peaceably to consider causes of complaint and to petition the king. They resolved that, after September 10, 1775, they would refuse to export to Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies any merchandise or commodity unless their grievances were redressed; and after December 1, 1774, they would import nothing into British America from the United Kingdom, or from any other place where the goods, wares, or merchandise had previously been exported from Great Britain or Ireland, and that no such goods, wares, or merchandise should be used.

Meanwhile the English government steadily pursued the policy of coercion. The petition from Congress to the king was referred to the House of Commons, and by a large majority that body refused to hear it. The trade of England was restricted, the colonists were forbidden to fish on the banks of Newfoundland, and similar embargoes were laid on the Middle and Southern colonies.

The various wars with the Indians and French in which the colonies had been engaged had trained them for battle, and at this time defenses against apprehended hostilities were everywhere being prepared.

The battle of Lexington took place on the 19th of April, 1775; it was the signal of war, and throughout the country magazines and arsenals were seized by the people. An army of twenty thousand men, volunteers, soon appeared in the vicinity of Boston, and Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold a little later captured Ticonderoga and Crown Point.

The third Methodist conference, like its predecessors, was held in Philadelphia on the 17th of May. At the same time in the same city the second Continental Congress was convened, having organized on the 10th of May; it continued in session until August 1st, when it adjourned until the 5th of September.

An increase that would have been surprising in any case, but in the distracted condition of the public mind was astonishing, and seemed to the conference a demonstration that God was with them, was noted in the Society, which now had 3148 members, of whom 200 were in New York, 190 in Philadelphia, 300 in New Jersey, and the large remainder, nearly 2500, south of Philadelphia. Methodism was progressing much more rapidly in Baltimore than elsewhere, there being 840 members in the city and suburbs, and 800 in Brunswick County, Virginia. Nineteen ministers were stationed, among them Robert

Strawbridge. Contrary to his own judgment, Francis Asbury was appointed to Norfolk, Va. Thomas Rankin, the General Assistant, was instructed to "travel through the connection till the month of September, and then take a quarter in New York." All the preachers in New Jersey were required to change in three months; certain others at the end of six months, and those in Brunswick and Hanover, Va., "as the assistant thinks proper."

The conference ordered throughout the connection a general fast, for the prosperity of the work and for the peace of America, to be observed on Tuesday, the 18th of July.

While the second Continental Congress was sitting, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, with a large force of British troops, arrived on the continent, and on the 17th of June was fought the battle of Bunker Hill. Immediately after this event an application was made to Congress by the Provincial Assembly of Massachusetts, desiring direction and aid. They informed the Congress that they had raised a force of 13,600 men, and had made proposals to other New England colonies to furnish men in the same proportions; and ventured to suggest that, as they had been compelled to do this, an American army should forthwith be raised for the common cause. The city and county of New York also asked the advice of Congress concerning the course to take with regard to British troops expected in that quarter. Whereupon the Congress at once resolved itself into a committee of the whole to consider the state of America.

It took measures to adopt the regiments that had been raised by the New England provinces as the nucleus of a general army, and added thereto other forces raised for defense, and thus formed the body known to history as the American Continental Army. On the 15th of June George

Washington was unanimously chosen commander-in-chief of these forces.

The centers of the Methodist movement were New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, seaports on Chesapeake Bay, and Norfolk, together with the interior of Virginia, New Jersey, and portions of Pennsylvania and Delaware not remote from the sea-coast. In this situation, the intense dislike to England and actual war, the foreign relations of Methodism, and the fact that the most influential traveling preachers were Englishmen and that the connection acknowledged the authority of John Wesley, exposed them and the societies to a prejudice speedily transformed into hostility whenever they faithfully preached against the immorality which ever accompanies war, and when, as most believed it to be their duty to do, they condemned the prevalence of the war-spirit.

No Methodist preacher, especially no European, arose in America during the whole of the year 1775 without immediately dividing the congregation, large or small, into the sympathetic and the suspicious; and the opposition which Methodist preaching on purely moral or doctrinal grounds had everywhere excited was liable at any moment to be transformed into partisan fury or patriotic indignation, according to the temperament of those who perceived, or thought they perceived, any expressed or implied question of the rightfulness of the attitude of the colonies.

## CHAPTER VII.

### IN THE THROES OF REVOLUTION.

AT the most critical juncture in the political and religious situation of the New World, a still more serious complication was caused by the hostility of John Wesley to the measures taken by the colonists in their struggle against the exactions and impositions of the British government. This was the more offensive to the people of America because, while the struggle was confined wholly to the realm of discussion and diplomacy, he had appeared to sympathize with them rather than with the ministers of the crown and the acts of Parliament.

In the year 1768 he wrote "Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs," in which he discussed local and current questions. Speaking of the colonies, he said: "I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America; I doubt whether any man can defend them either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence."

To the astonishment of all, the opposition of a large number, and the gratification of every Tory on both sides of the Atlantic, there was issued in 1775 "A Calm Address to our American Colonies, by the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, M.A." The doctrine of this "Address" was that the Americans were the descendants of men who either had no votes or had resigned them by emigration; they therefore possessed exactly what their ancestors left them—not a vote in making laws and choosing legislators, but the happiness of being protected by laws and the duty of



obeying them. Wesley undertook to show that the late acts of Parliament were the occasion, but not a just cause of the outbreak, and said: "Forty years ago, when my brother was in Boston, it was the general language there, 'We must shake off the yoke; we shall never be a free people till we shake off the English yoke.'"

Dr. Samuel Johnson had issued, just before this publication, a pamphlet entitled "Taxation no Tyranny," an answer to the resolutions and address of the American colonies. Wesley's "Calm Address" was little more than an abridgment of this essay; and, as he made no reference to Dr. Johnson, he was "at once pounced upon as a plagiarist and a renegade of the worst description." "Wesley was now one of the most conspicuous men in England, and perhaps no ecclesiastical personage of the realm swayed a wider influence over the masses on questions involving religious interests. Hence the publication of his 'Calm Address' produced an unparalleled sensation."<sup>1</sup>

The controversy waxed bitter, and the titles of the pamphlets, the details, and the replies, though intended to be sarcastic and cutting, seem trivial, when they are not mere vulgar abuse, at the present day. One was "A Cool Reply to 'A Calm Address'"; another, "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing; or, An Old Jesuit Unmasked"; and the youthful Toplady, Wesley's most virulent foe, author of "Rock of Ages," seized his opportunity and wrote a tract entitled "An Old Fox Tarred and Feathered." In this he charged that Wesley's "Calm Address," as to both matter and expression, was "a bundle of Lilliputian shafts picked and stolen out of Dr. Johnson's pincushion."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tyerman's "The Life and Times of John Wesley," vol. iii., pp. 186, 187.

<sup>2</sup> For full discussion of the subject and references to other pamphlets, see Tyerman's "The Life and Times of John Wesley," vol. iii.

Meanwhile Dr. Johnson wrote to Wesley, thanking him for the addition of "your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a man as yourself may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has upon the public I know not; but I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right who, though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato stayed."<sup>1</sup>

The first in the field and the ablest of Wesley's critics was Caleb Evans, a Baptist minister, and, by the testimony of one who had no sympathy with the American cause, "a man of good sense, a diligent student, a faithful pastor, and extensively useful, but a rampant advocate of what was called liberty." In a pamphlet he charged Wesley with having suddenly changed his opinions; with having at the late election advised the Bristol Methodists to vote for the American candidate; and further, with having but a short time before recommended a book entitled "An Argument in Defense of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonies to Tax Themselves."

Wesley denied that he had seen the book; but Evans proved that William Pine, Wesley's own printer, and the Rev. James Roquet, his friend, were both prepared to attest on oath that Wesley had recommended that book to them. Evans was by this testimony convinced that Wesley had deliberately falsified, and in a new edition of his tract directed attention to "the shameful versatility and disingenuity of this artful man."

Thomas Olivers, one of Wesley's converts, came forward early in 1776 with "A Defense of the Rev. John Wesley" on the ground of pressure of business and advancing years, on account of which he had forgotten that he had recommended the book or even seen it. Olivers said that he

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's "Life of Johnson."

preached and exhorted twenty or thirty times a week and often more, answered thirty or forty letters, prepared something in whole or in part for the press, and a large variety of tracts on different subjects passed through his hands; it was not, therefore, strange that his memory should often fail. But Wesley's native frankness was his best vindicator; for on the 12th of November, 1775, he had written to the Rev. Mr. Roquet this letter:

“DEAR JAMES: I will now simply tell you the thing as it is. As I was returning from the Leeds Conference, one gave me the tract which you refer to, part of which I read on my journey. The spirit of it I observed to be admirably good, and I *then* thought the arguments conclusive. In consequence of which, I suppose (though I do not remember it), I recommended it both to you and others; but I had so entirely forgotten it that even when it was brought to me the other day I could not recollect that I had seen it.

“I am, etc.,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

Several Methodist writers honestly and benevolently attempt to relieve the memory of John Wesley from the charge of hostility to the cause of the colonists during the Revolutionary struggle. But we are reluctantly compelled to demonstrate that the method which they adopt is without historical support, and capable of absolute disproof.

This is the case as presented by Stevens:

“Wesley's error in this publication [the “Calm Address”] afforded him a signal advantage at last—the opportunity in the same year of frankly correcting himself, and of acknowledging the right of the colonies in their stern quarrel. . . .

“The day of Lexington and Concord struck Europe with surprise, and gave a new and stern argument on the question to thoughtful Englishmen. Wesley saw its significance at once. Waiting but one day after the arrival of the news, he wrote to Lord North and the Earl of Dartmouth, severally, an emphatic letter.

“‘I am,’ he said, ‘a High-churchman, the son of a High-churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance; and yet, in spite of my long-rooted prejudices, I cannot avoid thinking these, an oppressed people, asked for nothing more than their legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow. But waiving this, I ask, Is it common sense to use force toward the Americans? Whatever has been affirmed, these men will not be frightened, and they will not be conquered easily. Some of our valiant officers say that “two thousand men will clear America of these rebels.” No, nor twenty thousand, be they rebels or not, nor perhaps treble that number. They are strong; they are valiant; they are one and all enthusiasts, enthusiasts for liberty, calm, deliberate enthusiasts. In a short time they will understand discipline as well as their assailants. But you are informed “they are divided among themselves.” So was poor Rehoboam informed concerning the ten tribes; so was Philip informed concerning the people of the Netherlands. No; they are terribly united; they think they are contending for their wives, children, and liberty. Their supplies are at hand, ours are three thousand miles off. Are we able to conquer the Americans suppose they are left to themselves? We are not sure of this, nor are we sure that all our neighbors will stand stock-still.’”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stevens's “History of the Methodist Episcopal Church,” vol. i., pp. 283, 284.

The assumption upon which this theory rests is that Wesley had written the "Calm Address" before the battle of Lexington, and that the intelligence of it caused him to change his opinions and write these letters to Lord North and the Earl of Dartmouth; whereas he wrote the letter to Lord North while he still sympathized with the colonies, and was *afterward* convinced by Dr. Johnson's pamphlet that their cause was not well founded.<sup>1</sup> Yet the exhibition of this letter to George Bancroft, who had properly represented Mr. Wesley's state of mind upon this subject, led that historian to modify his views, which Stevens thus recognizes:

"I am happy to acknowledge, in behalf of the Methodist community, their obligations to Mr. Bancroft, who, when this important document was brought under his notice, had the candor to qualify by it his former allusions to Wesley, though in order to do so it was necessary to cancel one or more of his stereotype plates. He inserts a large extract from the letter in the sixth edition of his seventh volume. The Methodist denomination will congratulate itself that its venerated founder is thus, almost for the first time in civil history, fairly represented in respect to this question, and that this justice has been accorded in a work which, by its remarkable merits, will be as immortal as its theme."<sup>2</sup>

The solemn predictions of that portion of Wesley's letter to Lord North quoted by Stevens were fulfilled, and there is much in the remainder which exhibits extraordinary foresight.

Until a short time after the Leeds Conference, August 1, 1775, he was of the same way of thinking; but in a few

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's famous letter to Lord North was written at Armagh, June 15, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., p. 284.

weeks Dr. Johnson published "Taxation no Tyranny," which caused him to reverse the direction of his impulsive current, and he at once threw out this firebrand.

To determine beyond future question the cause, the date, and the consequences of his change, the following indisputable testimony is adduced.

Wesley published in the autumn of 1775 a second edition of the "Calm Address." Concerning this he writes to his brother Charles:

"October 19, 1775.

"It takes time to set people's heads right; but we must despair of nothing. I have cast my bread upon the waters, and should have been content though there had been no present fruit. Some hours this morning I devote to 'Americanus.' What is material I shall endeavor to answer. It is well if I can give as good account of everything else as of my change of judgment. I find a danger now of a new kind—a danger of losing my love for the Americans; I mean, for their miserable leaders. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

And again:

"LONDON, October 28, 1775.

"I am just putting into the press a new edition of the 'Address,' corrected, *in which my change is accounted for* and two of the questions fully answered." <sup>2</sup>

The new edition contained "A Preliminary Address to the Reader," in which Wesley says:

"I was of a different judgment on this head till I read a tract entitled 'Taxation no Tyranny.' But as soon as I received more light myself I judged it to be my duty to impart it to others. I therefore extracted the chief arguments from that treatise, and added an application to those

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's "Works," vol. vi., p. 676.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vi., p. 677.

whom it most concerns. I was well aware of the treatment this would bring upon myself; but let it be, so I may in any degree serve my king and country." This settles the case that, instead of changing from the support of the government to advocacy of the colonies, he changed from sympathy with the colonies to advocacy of the government.

Late in the same year Wesley addressed this letter to "Lloyd's Evening Post":

"SIR: I have been seriously asked, From what motive did you publish your 'Calm Address to the American Colonies'?"

"I seriously answer, Not to get money. Had that been my motive, I should have swelled it into a shilling pamphlet and have entered it at Stationers' Hall.

"Not to get preferment for myself or my brother's children. I am a little too old to gape after it myself; and if my brother or I sought it for them, we have only to show them to the world.

"Not to please any man living, high or low. I know mankind too well. I know they that love you for political service love you less than their dinner; and they that hate you hate you worse than the devil.

"Least of all did I write with a view to inflame any; just the contrary. I contributed my mite toward putting out the flame which rages all over the land. This I have more opportunity of observing than any other man in England. I see with pain to what a height this already rises in every part of the nation. And I see many pouring oil into the flame by crying out, 'How unjustly, how cruelly, the king is using the poor Americans, who are only contending for their liberty and for their legal privileges!'

"Now there is no possible way to put out this flame, or hinder its rising higher and higher, but to show that the

Americans are not used either cruelly or unjustly ; that they are not injured at all, seeing they are not contending for liberty—this they had even in its full extent, both civil and religious ; neither for any legal privileges, for they enjoy all that their charters grant. But what they contend for is the illegal privilege of being exempt from parliamentary taxation—a privilege this which no charter ever gave to any American colony yet ; which no charter can give, unless it be confirmed both by king, lords, and commons ; which, in fact, our colonies never had ; which they never claimed till the present reign ; and probably they would not have claimed it now had they not been incited thereto by letters from England. . . .

“This being the real state of the question, without any coloring or aggravation, what impartial man can either blame the king or commend the Americans ?

“With this view—to quench the fire by laying the blame where it was due—the ‘Calm Address’ was written. . . .

“JOHN WESLEY.”

Under date of December 9, 1776, his “Journal” contains this entry : “In answer to a very angry letter, lately published in ‘The Gazetteer,’ I published the following :<sup>1</sup>

“‘*To the Rev. Mr. Caleb Evans.*

“‘REV. SIR: YOU affirm (1) that I once “doubted whether the measures taken with respect to America could be defended either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence.” I did doubt of these five years, nay, indeed, *five months* ago.

“‘YOU affirm (2) that I “declared” (last year) “the Americans were an oppressed, injured people.” I do not remember that I did ; but very possibly I might.

<sup>1</sup> Wesley’s “Works,” vol. iv., p. 445.



““ You affirm (3) that I then “ strongly recommended an argument for the exclusive right of the colonies to tax themselves.” I believe I did; but I am now of another mind. . . .

““ Your humble servant,  
 ““ JOHN WESLEY.’”

In the same year he published a long pamphlet entitled “ Some Observations on Liberty,” in which he compared John Hancock to a felon, contended against every proposition by which the colonists supported their cause, and called upon them to lay down their arms. The American editor of John Wesley's works, the celebrated and accomplished John Emory, is compelled to insert as a foot-note to this tract, “ As a political publication it cannot fail to meet the strong and decided disapprobation of Americans; and we insert it here, with a few others alike foreign to our own views, solely to fulfill our promise of a *complete* edition of his works.”<sup>1</sup>

It is an error to suppose that this change reflects in any degree adversely upon John Wesley. He was absolutely honest, but his training and mode of thought made it impossible for him to sympathize with the colonists from the moment they resorted to arms, and his horror of war intensified his feelings.

It is necessary to elucidate this subject that the distrust felt toward the Methodists may be explained, and the honor due Asbury and those who stood with him may be intelligently conferred.

Asbury regarded the change with discriminating charity, for, on receiving a letter from Wesley, he made this comprehensive entry :

“ I also received an affectionate letter from Mr. Wesley,

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's “ Works,” American edition, vol. vi., pp. 300-321.

and am truly sorry that the venerable man ever dipped into the politics of America. My desire is to live in love and peace with all men; to do them no harm, but all the good I can. However, it discovers Mr. Wesley's conscientious attachment to the government under which he lives. Had he been a subject of America, no doubt but he would have been as zealous an advocate of the American cause. But some inconsiderate persons have taken occasion to censure the Methodists in America on account of Mr. Wesley's political sentiments."<sup>1</sup>

American Methodism had fully entered upon a period of external persecution and internal difficulty, and the correspondence of Asbury and Rankin had convinced Wesley that they were unable to agree. He wrote to the latter, March 1, 1775:

“DEAR TOMMY: As soon as possible you must come to a full and clear explanation both with Brother Asbury and with Jemmy Dempster. But I advise Brother Asbury to return to England the first opportunity.”

On April 21st of the same year he wrote: “Brother Asbury has sent me a few lines, and I thank him for them. But I do not advise him to go to Antigua. Let him come home without delay.”<sup>2</sup>

And May 19th: “I doubt not but Brother Asbury and you will part friends; I hope I shall see him at the conference. He is quite an upright man. I apprehend he will go through his work more cheerfully when he is within a little distance from me.”<sup>3</sup>

This shows that Rankin had prejudiced Wesley against Asbury.

<sup>1</sup> “Asbury's Journal,” vol. i., pp. 176, 177.

<sup>2</sup> Wesley's “Works,” vol. vii., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vii., p. 9.

Having been informed that Asbury remained in the work, Wesley wrote to Rankin, August 13, 1775: "I am not sorry that Brother Asbury stays with you another year. In that time it will be seen what God will do with North America, and you will easily judge whether our preachers are called to remain any longer therein."

Among the important spiritual results of the year were those which attended the preaching of George Shadford and his colleagues in Virginia. At that time many of the planters were little better than heathen, and the country was given up to dissipation. Shadford's pathetic eloquence moved all classes. The chief dancing-master came to hear him clad in scarlet on the week-days, and on Sunday in green, and was so affected that he relinquished a large and profitable school and began to teach ordinary English branches. When Shadford asked his name, a friend said that he was called Madcap. Shadford responded, "A very proper name for a dancing-master;" but afterward he found this was only a nickname, his real name being Metcalf. This man became one of the most devoted members of the connection, lived for six or seven years a useful life, and "died a great witness for God."

His progress checked by a flood, Shadford applied to a planter for entertainment, and was kindly received. After partaking of refreshment, he inquired if the country were well inhabited, and on being told that it was, proposed to the planter to invite his neighbors that he might preach to them. Shadford's description of the results is concise and quaint: "He sent out and we had many hearers, but they were as wild boars. After I had reproved them they behaved very well during the preaching. When I conversed with the planter and his wife, I found them entirely ignorant of themselves and of God; I labored to convince them both, but it seemed to little purpose." It was not

long, however, before they were spiritually illuminated. From this circumstance the place became a local appointment, and later a church was erected there. In two or three years it numbered 70 persons, and on the whole circuit in that year 1800 members were added.

The Conference of 1776 was held in Baltimore, and the reports exhibited an increase of 1773 members, the total being 4921. The number of preachers had increased in similar ratio, being at this time 24, 9 of whom were admitted on trial.

Among them was Freeborn Garrettson, who, having been long under conviction of sin and a devout attendant at church, began to hear the Methodist preachers, and, after months of mental perturbation, was converted while on horseback. His own words contain one of the clearest delineations in religious biography of final surrender of the soul to God, and that reconstruction of mind and heart which became the basis of the life-work of the Methodists.<sup>1</sup> Yet the next morning after his conversion he was beset with temptations which he attributes to the devil; but a careful consideration of his early experience shows that those temptations were the results in their intellectual form of the struggle between his new and old views, and the entire change of his relations in life, which he saw to be the logical consequence of his experience. His perturbation increased; for, although plainly called to preach and willing to act as a local supply, he could not consent to become a traveling preacher. At last he was almost weary of life; but after newly consecrating himself to God, and declaring that if God would manifest his will he would submit, he threw himself upon the bed and immediately fell asleep. He then dreamed that the devil appeared before him and at that minute a good angel came and said,

<sup>1</sup> Bangs's "Life of Garrettson," p. 36.

“Will you go and preach the gospel?” He declined on the ground that he was unworthy; whereupon the devil seized him, and he saw that there was but one way of escape, and that a narrow one. The good angel again asked him if he would preach, and he consented. Awakening in a rapture, he resolved to go; yet after he set out he was so tortured that he was “ready to desire that his horse might throw him and put an end to his life, or maim him so that he might not be able to go on.” These struggles continued until the Conference of 1776, when he was duly received on trial and fully established in a career which was like the path of the just—a shining light, increasing more and more unto the perfect day.

Asbury was unable to reach the conference at Baltimore; but on the 27th of May, when informed by Rankin that he was appointed to Baltimore, he cheerfully submitted, though he feared that the climate would be injurious to him.

In less than three weeks after the conference adjourned, the motion was made in the Continental Congress to declare the colonies free and independent; and on the 4th of July the immortal Declaration of Independence was adopted, after which loyalty to the British crown became a crime. Prayers for the king were forbidden on penalty of imprisonment. No man, at least in the vicinity of active operations, could travel without a passport, and none could be obtained by those who refused to take the test-oaths, which varied in different colonies, some requiring the taking up of arms in favor of national independence if called upon to do so by the authorities.

Early in the summer Asbury had repaired to Baltimore, where he was received by Mr. Gough. In one of his excursions he was arrested for preaching the gospel and fined five pounds. Though his health was very poor, his daily

work was as follows: "To read about a hundred pages a day; usually to pray in public five times a day and to lecture in prayer-meeting every evening."

The Cherokee Indians had begun to break out, and on the 31st of July his mind was disturbed by the reports of slaughters. English ships were coasting to and fro, watching for some advantages; but "what," asked he, "can they expect to accomplish without an army of two or three hundred thousand men? and even then there would be but little prospect of their success."

Mr. Gough accompanied Asbury to the warm sulphur springs, where the latter remained six weeks. He thought himself, in this visit, still in the way of duty, and after a week's stay wrote: "There is a manifest check to the frightful tide of immorality, and the prejudices of many people are in a great degree removed, so that I hope that my visit to this place will be for the benefit of the souls of some as well as for the benefit of my own body." While there Asbury met members of other denominations, and records: "My spirit has been much united to the faithful people of God of every denomination." The house in which he stayed was not the most agreeable. "The size of it was twenty feet by sixteen, and there were seven beds and sixteen persons therein, and some noisy children." The parson there had encouraged the gentlemen to oppose him. When he departed he says: "I this day turn my back on the springs as the best and the worst place that I ever was in—good for health but most injurious to religion."

He received information on the 2d of April, 1777, that some of his brethren had determined to leave the country, and he wrote to George Shadford that as long as he could stay and preach without injuring his conscience it appeared to be his duty to abide with the flock.

The Conference of 1777 was held May 20th, at a preach-

ing-place near Deer Creek, in Harford County, Maryland, and, notwithstanding the troublous times, there had been an increase of 2047 in the membership, the total being 6968, and an increase of preachers from 24 to 36. Fourteen had been admitted on trial, the first of the list being Caleb B. Pedicord, a man of unusual sweetness of spirit and efficiency in conversions and every form of spiritual influence. Another was John Dickins, of high intellectual ability. New York appears in the list of stations, but without a minister, as it was inaccessible by reason of the occupation of the city by the British army. Another fast-day was appointed. The preachers resolved not to take any steps to detach themselves from the work of God for the ensuing year, and in view of the fact that the preaching of funeral sermons had been carried so far as to become contemptible, they determined to inform every society that they would not preach any funeral sermons except for those "that we have reason to think died in the fear and favor of God."

Twenty preachers were present at this conference; and the business was conducted with harmony, peace, and love. The brethren who intended to return to Europe agreed to remain until the way was quite open. The conference closed, however, in deepest distress. Asbury remarks that it was such a parting as he never saw before, the American preachers thinking that they should not see the faces of their English fellow-laborers any more; for these men could not take the oaths required, and therefore were liable at any moment to arrest, and thus would be prevented from performing the work of the ministry.

Soon after the conference Asbury was invited by the vestrymen of Garrettson Church to become its pastor; but declined the call, justly regarding himself as providentially occupied.

On the 21st of July Asbury heard Rankin preach his last sermon in America, and remarks that his own mind was "a little dejected, and he felt some desire to return to England, but was willing to commit his way to the Lord," and should do nothing that would separate him from his brethren, adding: "I hope to live and die a Methodist."

In the autumn of 1775 Robert Williams died, and Asbury preached his funeral sermon, characterizing him in terms which give his name a place of honor in the history of this country and of Christianity: "He has been a very useful, laborious man, and the Lord gave him many seals to his ministry. Perhaps no one in America has been an instrument of awakening so many souls as God has awakened by him."<sup>1</sup>

Unable to take the test-oaths or to sympathize with the colonies, Rankin left the country. In an autobiographical narrative<sup>2</sup> he says: "The British being in possession of Philadelphia, I left Maryland in September, and through divers dangers got safe into that city in the month of November. I spent the winter there, and left the capes of Delaware on the 17th of March, 1778, and arrived safe at the Cove of Cork on the 15th of April."

\* Martin Rodda, another English preacher, having been so indiscreet as to distribute copies of the king's proclamation, was obliged to escape to the coast by the help of slaves, but reached Philadelphia and took refuge in the British fleet. In October, 1777, Shadford informed Asbury that Rankin and Rodda had left the continent. This, however, must refer to their retiring into the British lines, after which Shadford had no communication with them and supposed that they had departed to England.

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., pp. 162, 163.

<sup>2</sup> "Arminian Magazine," vol. ii., p. 197.



After the departure of Rodda and Rankin, only Shadford of the English preachers remained with Asbury. Early in 1778 Asbury was staying with his friend, Thomas White, who was a devout and consistent member of the English church, a distinguished citizen, and Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. His wife, of the same communion, was of the type of Susanna Wesley, training her family and giving special Bible instruction to her slaves. The first time she heard Methodist preaching she recognized its predominant spiritual quality, and found in its fervency a response to the longings of her own ardent nature. Inducing her husband to accompany her with the children to one of their appointments, he was so favorably affected by what he heard that he invited the preachers to his residence, where services were held regularly till the erection of "White's Chapel."

While here Shadford urged upon Asbury to consider whether it was not their duty to return home. They agreed to spend a day together in fasting and prayer for the settlement of this question; but their impressions at its close were very dissimilar. Said Asbury, "My convictions are as clear and strong as ever that it is my duty to remain." Shadford said, "My work in America is done; I feel with as much certainty that it is my duty to return now as I felt it to be my duty to come hither four years ago." Then said Asbury, "One of us must be in error." "Not necessarily so," was the reply; "I may have a call to go and you to stay."<sup>1</sup>

Asbury, referring to the departure of George Shadford and Samuel Spraggs,<sup>2</sup> says: "I am under some heaviness of mind. But it is no wonder: three thousand miles from home; my friends have left me; I am considered by

<sup>1</sup> "Bishop Asbury," by Frederick W. Briggs, M.A. (London, third edition, p. 119).

<sup>2</sup> Who went North.

some as an enemy of the country, every day liable to be seized by violence and abused. However, all this is but a trifle to suffer for Christ and the salvation of souls. Lord, stand by me!"<sup>1</sup>

Shadford said subsequently: "I believe we both obeyed the call of Providence. We saw we must part, though we loved as David and Jonathan; and, indeed, these times made us love one another in a peculiar manner. Oh, how glad were we to meet and pour our griefs into each other's bosom!"<sup>2</sup>

Although provided with a passport, Shadford was attacked on the highway and his life threatened; but he returned in safety to England. There he was very useful, highly honored, and lived to old age, when, though blind, he led a class of one hundred persons. At evening-time it was light, for in his last years he was happily married, and his blindness was cured by a surgical operation. "You will have the pleasure," said the surgeon, "of seeing to use your knife and fork again." "Doctor," replied the veteran, "I shall have a greater pleasure—that of seeing to read my Bible."<sup>3</sup>

This good man "excelled any of Wesley's other American missionaries in immediate usefulness."<sup>4</sup>

Methodists were now almost universally under the suspicion of being Tories. In Maryland the test-oaths required a pledge to take up arms if called upon to do so by the authorities, and this was against Asbury's conscience as a preacher of the gospel. He therefore retired to Delaware, making his home with Judge White. In March, 1778, he wrote: "Blessed be God! his providence hath cast my lot in a quiet, agreeable family, where I can make

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., p. 340.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 342.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

the best improvement of my time in study and devotion. I intend to abide here for a season till the storm is abated. The grace of God is a sufficient support while I bear the reproach of men and am rewarded evil for all the good which I have done and desire to do for mankind. I am strongly persuaded that divine Providence will bring about a change before long." <sup>1</sup>

Judge White was arrested on the 2d of April, and Mrs. White, the children, and Asbury were left in great alarm. Regarding himself as to some extent the cause of his host's arrest, Asbury determined to depart as soon as possible. He traveled over a lonesome and crooked road, but late at night found a shelter where he thought he might remain, comforting himself by reflecting that his trials were like those of the saints of olden times who wandered in deserts, in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, but recognizing the fact that their afflictions far exceeded his. The next day he spent much of his time reading the Bible and the Greek Testament; but a report reached him that it would be better for him to depart. In the morning he started, but had to hide in a swamp till about sunset, when he took refuge with a friend.

While in this neighborhood news came that Joseph Hartley had been arrested in Queen Anne County, Maryland, on the preceding Sunday. This depressed him; but, called on to visit a man in distress of mind, and being successful in leading him to trust in the Lord, he encouraged himself by the thought that Providence might have sent him there for that purpose.

He was hidden among these strangers for a month, when he ventured back to the mansion of Judge White. The latter had been seized on the charge of being a Methodist and presumptively a Tory, but after five weeks' detention

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 269.

was acquitted. With him Asbury spent many months; but, after a brief period of almost absolute concealment, he began correspondence with Methodists, moved about among the societies near at hand, and sometimes preached.

In the same State, and at no great distance, he gained the friendship of Judge Barrett, and of a far more distinguished man, Richard Bassett, a renowned lawyer of Delaware, a member of the convention which framed the Constitution of the United States, a Senator in the first Congress, and a judge of the United States Court for the district including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.<sup>1</sup>

The governor of Delaware, who was not a Methodist nor even a religious man, came to regard Asbury and the Methodists with such favor that he wrote to the governor of Maryland in behalf of the suffering Methodists in that State, leading to their release from prison. Lednum states that a letter which Asbury wrote to Rankin in 1777 (in which he imparted his belief that the Americans would become a free and independent nation, and declared that he was too much knit in affection to many of them to leave them, and that Methodist preachers had a great work to do under God in this country) had fallen into the hands of the authorities in America, and had produced a decided change in their feelings toward Asbury.

It was while Asbury was concealed at Judge White's that Bassett met him. Being on a professional journey, he called there to spend the night, and as he opened the door caught a glimpse of Asbury and some other preachers, and said to Mrs. White, "Who are those men dressed in sable garments and keeping themselves aside?" She replied, "They are some of the best men in the world; they are Methodist preachers." Bassett, disturbed by this

<sup>1</sup> Cooper's "Discourse on the Life of Asbury."

information, replied, "Then I cannot stay here to-night." Said Mrs. White, "You must stay; they cannot hurt you."

At the table Bassett was delighted with Asbury's conversation, and invited him to call in case he visited Dover. On his return home he told his wife of this meeting and what he had done; whereat she was greatly troubled, and he could appease her only by saying, "It is not likely that he will come." But a while later, looking out of his window, he saw the Methodist approaching. "That evening Asbury charmed by his conversation a large circle at the tea-table till late into the night."

After Judge White had publicly avowed his connection with the Methodists he visited Judge Bassett. It was reported about the streets of Dover that a Methodist was there, and a crowd, who thought all Methodists Tories, surrounded the house to seize him. Bassett, who was a militia officer, with drawn sword met them at the door and shouted, "He is no more a Tory than you are. You shall have him only by passing over my dead body."<sup>1</sup>

The Conference of 1778 was held at Leesburg, Va., May 19th, and its records show a decline in members of 873 and in preachers stationed of 7. Important changes had transpired in all parts of the country where Methodism existed. Six new circuits were added at this conference in Virginia, and the Carolina circuit in North Carolina was divided into three, named respectively Roanoke, Tar River, and New Hope; but on account of the war five of the old circuits were wholly omitted from the minutes; these were New York, Philadelphia, Chester, Frederick, and Norfolk.

Asbury was a firm believer that evil pursues those who obstruct the Word of God. In harmony with this view, under date of May 16, 1778, he entered in his "Journal"

<sup>1</sup> Stevens and Lednum.

these words: "It may be observed that two of our preachers have been apprehended rather than do violence to conscience; and the men by whom they were both taken were dangerously wounded within a few weeks after they had laid hands upon them."<sup>1</sup>

He often felt his loneliness: "I saw myself pent up in a corner; my body in a manner worn out; my English brethren gone, so that I had no one to consult." He thus prayed: "Lord, must I pine away and quench the light of Israel?"<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the year 1778 his "Journal" tells of constant work. The entry for December 18th is: "For twenty months before these troublesome times fully came I foresaw the probability of them, and was much stirred up to rely upon God and prepare for the worst."<sup>3</sup> January 2, 1779, he says, "Upon mature reflection, I do not repent my late voluntary retirement in the State of Delaware."<sup>4</sup>

A significant entry occurs for April 4, 1779: "Lord's day.—I breakfasted with a Presbyterian minister, and endeavored to answer some objections which he started; but could not attempt a vindication of those amongst us who had dipped deep in politics."<sup>5</sup>

Two conferences were held this year; the first for the Northern stations, at the house of Judge White, on the 28th of April. All the preachers were present, and Caleb Pedicord was the only probationer received into full membership at this conference. Several important entries are made, and for the first time appears the question, "Who desist from traveling?" under which are recorded two names. "Who of the preachers are willing to take the stations this conference shall place them in?" Sixteen signatures were appended to this. No helper was to make

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 287.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 296.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 298.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 308.

any alteration in the circuit or appoint preachers to any new place without consulting the assistant. It was stated that the Delaware Conference was held for the convenience of the preachers in the Northern stations, that all might have an opportunity of meeting, and that it was considered as preparatory to the conference in Virginia. They agreed to guard against a separation from the church, directly or indirectly, to meet the children once a fortnight, and to examine parents with regard to their conduct toward their children.

But the questions which were to exert the most far-reaching influence over American Methodism were the twelfth and thirteenth.<sup>1</sup>

"*Ques.* 12. Ought not Brother Asbury to act as General Assistant in America?

"He ought: first, on account of his age; second, because originally appointed by Mr. Wesley; third, being joined with Messrs. Rankin and Shadford by express order from Mr. Wesley.

"*Ques.* 13. How far shall his power extend?

"On hearing every preacher for and against what is in debate, the right of determination shall rest with him, according to the minutes."

Twenty days later, May 18, 1779, at Fluvanna, in the Broken Back Church, another conference was held for the Southern stations, at which seven preachers were admitted on trial. Extensive revivals had taken place in all parts of the connection not directly affected by the war, and a table of the members in the society showed 8577, an increase of 2482 over the last year, and of the preachers, 49. No statistics are given of New York. Philadelphia is credited with 89 members, the whole State of New Jersey with 140, and Pennsylvania, exclusive of Philadelphia, with

<sup>1</sup> "Minutes of Conferences," vol. i., p. 10.

90; Delaware with 795, Baltimore circuit with 900, and Virginia and North Carolina included nearly all the remainder.

The conference made short work of those who differed from one of its prudential regulations. "In what light shall we view those preachers who receive money by subscription? *Aus.* As excluded from the Methodist connection."

During 1779 troubles arose from a desire and determination among the people of the South to have the ordinances administered to them. This question had arisen in 1777 under the presidency of Rankin, and was postponed until the Conference of 1778, at which William Watters, the oldest American preacher, presided. The same question was discussed and "laid over until the next conference."

It was well understood by Asbury and Watters that the Southern brethren were determined to have the sacraments. Their arguments were strong: the war separated them from Wesley; most of the clergymen of the Church of England had fled the country, and the few that were left, with one or two exceptions, were without the spirit, and had thrown off in large part the semblance, of piety. The people generally were destitute of the Lord's Supper, and there was no one to baptize the children.

Watters endeavored at the conference at Fluvanna to dissuade the people from taking the matter into their own hands. After a considerable discussion they appointed from the oldest brethren a committee to ordain ministers. A change was made at this conference concerning the length of time that preachers should remain upon trial. Hitherto the practice had been to take a preacher upon trial for one year only, and then admit him into full membership; but the conference decided that the preachers who had been upon trial one year should remain upon trial until the next conference.



The committee thus chosen ordained themselves and proceeded to ordain and set apart other ministers for the same purpose—that they might administer the holy ordinances to the church of Christ.<sup>1</sup> They went forth to their circuits as formerly, “and administered the sacraments wherever they went, provided the people were willing to partake with them.” The leaders were zealous, and the greater part very devout; and most of the preachers in the South, and the larger part of the members, sympathized with the plan. However, “some of the old Methodists would not commune with them, but steadily adhered to their former customs.”<sup>2</sup>

Under the new plan the preachers were very successful in the South; many conversions took place, and a general spirit of liveliness and unction accompanied the work. But the preachers north of Virginia took a decided stand against the step, seeing in it danger of a separation, and the result was “that both parties trembled for the ark of God and shuddered at the thought of dividing the church of Christ.” For a considerable period there seemed little ground to hope that they would ever recede from that plan.<sup>3</sup>

During Asbury’s retirement he made the acquaintance and gained the friendship of the Rev. Dr. M’Gaw, an influential clergyman of the Church of England, through whom, in Dover, the capital of Delaware, Asbury was introduced to a number of families who subsequently became Methodists. Dr. M’Gaw soon afterward became rector of St. Paul’s Church in Philadelphia, and so zealously espoused the cause of the Methodists that in 1779 “Forrest Chapel,” the first Methodist chapel in the State, was erected in Dover through his efforts.<sup>4</sup>

The ninth Annual Conference was held in Baltimore,

<sup>1</sup> Lee’s “History of the Methodists,” p. 69.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> It was afterward called “Thomas Chapel.”

April 24, 1780, and shows a decline in membership of 73, a gain in Philadelphia of 1, a loss in Baltimore of 20, and in ministers of 7.

The important business transacted showed that the society was slowly developing into a denomination. A form of deed for the preaching-house was printed, and provisions made for the appointment of trustees. It was ordered that every traveling preacher should take a license at every conference; that Brother Asbury, on behalf of the conference, should sign these; that no local preacher or exhorter should presume to speak in public without a note of authority once every quarter (if required) from the assistant; that the preachers should speak before prayer to every person, one by one, in families where they lodged, "if time will permit, or give a family exhortation after reading a chapter."

Certain questions with the answers are so important that they must be given in full:

"*Ques.* 12. Shall we continue in close connection with the church, and press our people to a closer communion with her?"

"Yes."

"*Ques.* 20. Does this whole conference disapprove the step our brethren have taken in Virginia?"

"Yes."

"*Ques.* 21. Do we look upon them no longer as Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley and us till they come back? <sup>1</sup>

"Agreed."

"*Ques.* 22. Shall Brothers Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters attend the Virginia Conference, and inform them of our proceedings in this, and receive their answer?"

<sup>1</sup> This refers to a partial separation which took place in Virginia on account of the ordinances.

"Yes."

"*Ques.* 26. What must be the conditions of our union with our Virginia brethren?"

"To suspend all their administrations for one year, and all meet together in Baltimore."

"*Ques.* 16. Ought not this conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves to give promises to set them free?"

"Yes."

"*Ques.* 17. Does this conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not that others should do to us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom?"

"Yes."

"*Ques.* 23. Do we disapprove of the practice of distilling grain into liquor? Shall we disown our friends who will not renounce the practice?"

"Yes."

A few days after the adjournment of the conference a deed was executed for ground on which to erect a chapel, which was speedily constructed sufficiently to admit of occupation for religious services, though it remained unfinished until two generations had passed away. It was forty-two by forty-eight feet, built of brick, two stories high, and had a vestry-room connected with it. In November of the same year, a floor having been laid and rough seats arranged, the first quarterly meeting was held in it, and a thousand people attended. It was built about a mile from Frederica, by Judge Barrett, and hence known as "Barrett's Chapel."

While it was being erected, a gentleman of the neigh-

borhood wished to know what use was to be made of it. Being told that it was a place of worship for the Methodists, he said, "It is unnecessary to build such a house, for by the time the war is over, a corn-crib will hold them all." Its erection caused much opposition.

In the spring of 1780, probably in the month of April, Asbury emerged from his retirement, which had lasted two years and one month, and, after meeting with the preachers in conference at Baltimore, made a tour through Virginia for the purpose of settling the difficulties concerning the ordinances. He had previously written to the leaders of the movement, and conceded that strong grounds existed for their views, and acknowledged that they were governed by high moral and spiritual considerations. It is clear that the Virginia preachers were for turning out of the society all who would not submit to their administration; that Asbury had been endeavoring to unite the Protestant Episcopal minister and the Methodists, but the dissenters exclaimed: "We don't want your unconverted ministers; the people will not receive them."<sup>1</sup> He then records a purpose to "turn out shortly among them." In pursuance of this plan he tarried with Mr. Gough at Perry Hall, preparing conditions for a partial reconciliation, in hopes of bringing about a real one. Describing his state of mind, he says, "I go with a heavy heart, and fear the violence of a party of positive men."

Journeying southward with Freeborn Garrettson, they stayed at a hotel about forty miles from Baltimore. Garrettson talked with the landlord on the subject of religion, and prayed with him at night and in the morning, for he would not consent to call his family together. A high eulogium is pronounced upon Garrettson by Asbury: "Brother Garrettson will let no person escape a relig-

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 337.

ious lecture that comes in his way. Sure he is faithful, but what am I?"<sup>1</sup>

When seventy miles on their way they were entertained by Mr. Arnold, of whom Asbury says: "We found the plague was begun; the good man Arnold was warm for the ordinances." At various points on the route he met the people, and says that they were full of the ordinances; and at last reached Mannakin-town, where the Virginia Conference had agreed to meet. Notwithstanding the embarrassing circumstances, Asbury "conducted himself with a cheerful freedom, but found that there was a suppression in heart and practice." He spoke to his countryman, John Dickins, and found him opposed to continuance in union with the Episcopal Church. Watters and Garrettson concurred, but all with whom they conversed were inflexible. The conference having assembled, Asbury, Watters, and Garrettson, afterward joined by Dromgoole, did not enter until specially invited. Asbury, being permitted to speak, read Wesley's "Thoughts against a Separation," showed his letters of instruction from Wesley, set before them the sentiments of the Delaware and Baltimore conferences, read the epistles that had passed between them, his letter to Gatch, and the answer of Dickins. After this discussion the preachers seemed still more estranged, and Asbury, Garrettson, Watters, and Dromgoole withdrew to deliberate on the condition offered, which was a suspension for one year of the measures which they had taken, that correspondence might be had with Wesley. For an hour the advocates of ordination deliberated, and answered that they could not submit to the terms of union.

Asbury says, "I then prepared to leave the house and go to a near neighbor's to lodge, under the heaviest cloud I ever felt in America."<sup>2</sup> He returned on Wednes-

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 366.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 367.

day, the 10th, to take leave of the conference, intending to start immediately for the North, and found "they were brought to an agreement while I had been praying, as with a broken heart, in the house we went to lodge at; and Brothers Watters and Garrettson had been praying upstairs where the conference sat." Well did Asbury conclude that "the hand of God has been greatly seen in all this," and adds: "There might have been twenty promising preachers and three thousand people seriously affected by this separation."<sup>1</sup>

The Conference of 1781 began at Choptank, in the State of Delaware, April 16th, and adjourned to Baltimore on the 24th of the same month. Here thirty-nine of the preachers agreed to "preach the old Methodist doctrine, and strictly enforce the discipline, as contained in the 'Notes,' 'Sermons,' and 'Minutes' published by Mr. Wesley, so far as they respect both preachers and people, . . . and to discountenance a separation among either."

This conference began to talk about precedents, and asked about meeting at Choptank before going to Baltimore, to examine those who could not go to the latter place, and to provide supplies for circuits where the Lord is more immediately pouring out his Spirit. "Is there any precedent for this in the economy of Methodism?" To which the recorded answer is: "Yes; Mr. Wesley generally holds a conference in Ireland for the same purposes."

The rules passed were that no assistant should take a local preacher to travel in a circuit in the intervals of conference without consulting Asbury or the assistant near him; that no one, without similar consultation, should restore preaching to a house whence it was removed by his predecessor; that those applying to be received upon

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 367.

probation should be examined by the preachers; the first question to be asked being "whether they had been turned out"—shows that many had been expelled.

The greatest revival of religion had been on the southern shore of Maryland and in some parts of Delaware. A large increase had been made in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, in fact throughout the entire connection, the sum of the members being 10,539, a gain of 2035, and the number of preachers 54, a gain of 12. The Rev. Mr. Jarratt attended the conference, delivered several discourses, gave the preachers the benefit of his counsel, and administered baptism and the Lord's Supper. The probationary system was introduced, whereby candidates for reception into the society were tested and instructed for three months, and a rule was formed for settling financial disputes among the members.

Many of the members were drafted during that year, and when the militia were called out entered the army. The effects are sententiously described by Jesse Lee, who had personal knowledge of them:<sup>1</sup> "Some of them lost their lives, and some made shipwreck of the faith, and but few returned home with as much religion as they formerly possessed. Some of the Methodists were bound under conscience not to fight, and no threatenings could compel them to bear arms or hire a man to take their places. In consequence of this, some of them were *whipped*, some were fined, and some imprisoned; others were sent home, and many were much persecuted."

Numerous battles were fought in Virginia, and the general alarm often prevented the people from assembling; and when they met the conversation was principally upon the times and their disturbances. Before a meeting commenced the inquiry would be, "What is the news of the day?"

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," p. 77.

and this subject was resumed as soon as the exercises closed. One would say, "My son is killed;" another, "My husband is wounded," or "taken a prisoner," or "sick and likely to die." There being no papers or mails, all such information had to be given in conversation.

Notwithstanding this, in some parts of Virginia there were extensive revivals. Toward the close of the year the capture of Lord Cornwallis and his British army at Yorktown inspired hope that the war would soon end.

The tenth Annual Conference was held at Ellis's Preaching-house in Sussex County, Virginia, April 17, 1782, and adjourned to Baltimore May 21st. It had become necessary to have two conferences, one in the South and another in the North, the latter being of longer standing and composed of the older preachers; therefore, says Lee,<sup>1</sup> "it was allowed greater privileges than that in the South, especially in making rules and forming regulations for the societies. Accordingly, when anything was agreed to in the Virginia Conference and afterward disapproved of in the Baltimore Conference, it was dropped; but if any rule was fixed and determined on at the latter, the preachers in the South were under the necessity of abiding by it."

It was determined at the Conference of 1782 to have two conferences in each year, and, to guard against disorderly preachers, a certificate was given to each containing the proviso that "the authority which this gives is limited to the next conference." A similar caution was attached to the certificates of local preachers. It was also decided that no member should move to another part of the country without a certificate from the assistant preacher.

Relatively to the future of Methodism the most important question was this: "Do the brethren in conference

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," p. 78.



unanimously choose Brother Asbury to act according to Mr. Wesley's original appointment and preside over the American conference and the whole work?

“*Ans.* Yes.”

Times of meeting of the next year were fixed, and a special resolution was passed of acknowledgment to the Rev. Mr. Jarratt for his kind and friendly services to the preachers and people from the first entrance of the Methodists into Virginia; and the preachers in the South were advised to consult him in the absence of Brother Asbury and follow his advice. Arrangements were made for every assistant preacher or one of his helpers to travel with Asbury through his circuit. There were now 11,785 members, exclusive of the unreported number in New York.

Pursuant to the previous appointment, the eleventh Annual Conference assembled on the 6th of May, 1783, at Ellis's Preaching-house, and subsequently adjourned to Baltimore. There had been an increase of 23 in the number of ministers and 1955 members. Fourteen ministers were received on trial, among them Jesse Lee, forever afterward to be famous in Methodism.

A rule was passed extending to local preachers who held slaves contrary to laws which authorize their freedom in any of the United States.

For the first time the phrase “United States” appears in the minutes; for in April, 1783, Congress issued a proclamation declaring the cessation of arms on land and sea, and enjoined its observance.

While the conference was in session in Baltimore, the whole country was infused with the spirit of jubilation; and, instead of providing for four fast-days, as had been done for some years, an inspiring question was answered: “How many days of thanksgiving shall we have for our

public peace, temporal and spiritual prosperity, and for the glorious work of God?

*Ans.* The first Thursdays in July and October."

Two fast-days also were provided—the first Fridays in January and April.

Nearly all the Methodist preachers were unmarried, and no direct provision had been made for the support of families. But now the question appears: "How many preachers' wives are to be provided for?" and the names of eleven are given, and the amount of money necessary assessed upon the different circuits, the sum appropriated being two hundred and sixty pounds sterling.

There was an important question relating to temperance: "Should our converts be permitted to make spirituous liquors, sell and drink them in drams?"

*Ans.* By no means; we think it wrong in its nature and consequences, and desire all our preachers to teach the people by precept and example to put away this evil."

Asbury, on receiving the news of peace, wrote in his "Journal": "I had various exercises of mind on the occasion: it may cause great changes to take place amongst us; some for the better, and some for the worse. It may make against the work of God; our preachers will be far more likely to settle in the world, and our people, by getting into trade and acquiring wealth, may drink into its spirit."

While no statistics are reported from New York, the name of that city as well as Norfolk, Va., reappears in the minutes, Samuel Spraggs and John Dickins being stationed at New York. The former was admitted on trial at the second conference, May 25, 1774; in 1778 his name disappears from the minutes, and does not reappear until 1783. For five consecutive years he was acting as pastor in New York. We are indebted for conclusive proof on this point to the researches of Dr. J. B. Wakeley, who learned by the old book of John Street Church that Mr.

Spraggs was the preacher. The entries as given from February 26, 1779, reveal Revolutionary prices. The wood allowed him in 1782 for the single room which he occupied cost £21 13s. 6d. sterling. His salary was £137 a year, and was paid regularly from May, 1778, to June 10, 1783, during the whole of which time the city of New York was under British martial law. When the British arrived, Daniel Ruff, the pastor, left the city, and John Mann preached gratuitously until Samuel Spraggs came. In 1783, when Mr. Spraggs and Mr. Dickins were appointed, the trustees settled finally with the former, having paid him \$1302.50, which, according to the book, was raised by public and class collections.

Wakeley accounts for the size of the collections by stating that most of the churches were converted into barracks, while the services were regularly held in Wesley Chapel. The congregations must have been very large, British officers as well as soldiers attending. The preacher was paid a larger salary than the people were able to pay before the war or after peace was proclaimed. The old book also gives an account of the money raised through the class collections as distinguished from that raised in the public collections, and this was so large as to show that the classes must have been well attended. Furthermore, in the expenditures evidence appears that the preacher's house was kept in order, the sexton's salary paid, and money appropriated for love-feasts and other peculiarities of Methodism.

Shortly after John Dickins arrived, Samuel Spraggs withdrew from the Methodists and joined the Church of England, becoming pastor of the ancient church in Elizabeth, N. Y. There he died, and "in that venerable church is a tablet erected to his memory."<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the large attendance, the membership

<sup>1</sup> "Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism," by J. B. Wakeley, D.D., chaps. xxix., xxx.

had declined from 200 to 60. Concerning Mr. Dickins, Mr. Asbury records, April 5th: "This day I prevailed with Brother Dickins to go to New York, where I expect him to be far more useful than in his present station."

Already persons claiming to be Methodists, and asking to be recognized as preachers, began to come from Europe, so that the Conference of 1783 found it necessary to protect itself, and did so under Question 12: "How shall we conduct ourselves toward any European Methodists, should they come to this continent?"

"*Ans.* We will not receive them without a letter of recommendation which we have no reason to doubt the truth of."

When the Conference of 1783 adjourned, Asbury resumed his travels. Very extraordinary opportunities opened before the preachers.

Certain modern writers upon Methodism have spoken slightly of Jesse Lee's history, but without just cause. Considering the time when it was written, the peculiar character of the movement, the disturbed condition of the country during the greater part of the time comprehended in the history, and that Lee was first in the field, his history is worthy the name of a *multum-in-parvo*, containing many passages admirable in their freshness, clearness, and condensation, and made interesting by a quaintness of expression peculiar to the writer, and true to the genius of Methodism by the devout spirit everywhere exhibited and the topographical element frequently introduced.

The following account of the wonderful opportunities offered the preachers after the close of the Conference of 1783 is a fair illustration of the condensation and simplicity of his style:

"The Revolutionary War being now closed, and a gen-

eral peace established, we could go into all parts of the country without fear; and we soon began to enlarge our borders, and to preach in many places where we had not been before. We soon saw the fruit of our labors in the new circuits and in various parts of the country, even in old places where we had preached in former years with but little success.

“One thing in particular that opened the way for the spreading of the gospel by our preachers was this: during the war, which had continued seven or eight years, many of the members of our societies had, through fear, necessity, or choice, moved into the back settlements and into new parts of the country; and as soon as the national peace was settled, and the way was open, they solicited us to come among them; and by their earnest and frequent petitions, both verbal and written, we were prevailed on and encouraged to go among them; and they were ready to receive us with open hands and willing hearts, and to cry out, ‘*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*’”<sup>1</sup>

The conference which began at Ellis's Preaching-house in Virginia, April 30, 1784, and ended at Baltimore, May 28th, showed a wide distribution of the work and an increase of 1248 in the number of members. A rule was made determining who should attend the conferences—the assistants and those to be received into full connection. Previously notice had been given by Asbury and leading assistants to individuals orally or by correspondence. The greater strictness in administration concerning preachers must account for the slight increase (1) in the number. Twelve preachers were admitted on trial and four had desisted from traveling. A question was introduced, ever since repeated, and regarded as of great importance: “What preachers have died this year?” The names of

<sup>1</sup> Lee's “History of the Methodists,” pp. 84, 85.

two, Henry Metcalf and William Wright, are recorded, but no reference is made to their characters. Seven new circuits were recorded—four in Virginia and three in North Juniata, Trenton, and Long Island. Many of the new societies were adapted to serve as nuclei of large churches.

Wesley had sent a letter in October, 1783, which produced a profound impression on the connection.

“ BRISTOL, October 3, 1783.

“ 1. Let all of you be determined to abide by the Methodist doctrine and discipline, published in the four volumes of ‘ Sermons,’ and the ‘ Notes upon the New Testament,’ together with the large ‘ Minutes of Conference.’

“ 2. Beware of preachers coming from Great Britain or Ireland without a full recommendation from me. Three of our traveling preachers here eagerly desired to go to America; but I could not approve of it by any means, because I am not satisfied that they thoroughly like either our discipline or our doctrine; I think they differ from our judgment in one or both. Therefore, if these or any others come without my recommendation, take care how you receive them.

“ 3. Neither should you receive any preachers, however recommended, who will not be subject to the American conference and cheerfully conform to the minutes both of the American and English conferences.

“ 4. I do not wish our American brethren to receive any who make any difficulty on receiving *Francis Asbury* as the General Assistant.

“ Undoubtedly the greatest danger to the work of God in America is likely to arise either from preachers coming from Europe, or from such as will arise from among yourselves, speaking perverse things, or bringing in among you new doctrines, particularly Calvinian. You should guard

against this with all possible care, for it is far easier to keep them out than to thrust them out.

“I commend you all to the grace of God, and am

“Your affectionate friend and brother,

“JOHN WESLEY.”<sup>1</sup>

A rule was enacted embodying the principles stated in the foregoing letter.

To erect new chapels and pay debts a yearly subscription was to be made all through the circuits, and the preachers were instructed to “insist upon every member that is not supported by charity to give something.” Preachers were warned to avoid superfluity in dress themselves, and speak frequently and faithfully against it. Converts who buy and sell slaves are to be expelled, if they buy with no other design than to hold them as slaves, if they have been previously warned. On no consideration should they be permitted to sell. Local preachers who, in the States where the laws permit it, will not emancipate their slaves, are to be borne with in Virginia another year, but suspended in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Singing was to be reformed by the “preachers who had any knowledge in the notes improving it, learning to sing true themselves and keeping close to Mr. Wesley’s tunes and hymns.”

The stern attitude of the conference toward traveling preachers on the subject of slavery is revealed by Question 22: “What shall be done with our traveling preachers who now are, or hereafter shall be, possessed of slaves, and refuse to emancipate them where the law permits?”

“*Ans.* Employ them no more.”

Three conferences were appointed for the next year. Prior to 1784 the minutes had been taken but were

<sup>1</sup> Bangs’s “History of the Methodist Episcopal Church,” vol. i., pp. 148, 149.

kept in manuscript, not being printed until 1795; but after 1784 the minutes were annually published.

Thomas Ware was present at this conference, and many years later wrote:<sup>1</sup> "It was the first I attended. There was quite a number of preachers present. Although there were but few on whose heads time had begun to snow, yet several of them appeared to be wayworn and weather-beaten into premature old age. . . . I doubt whether there has ever been a conference among us in which an equal number could be found in proportion to the whole so dead to the world and so gifted and enterprising as were present at that of 1784."

The distribution of the members, compared with the subsequent growth of the denomination, was peculiar. The whole number of members reported was 14,988; of these about eleven percent. were north of Mason and Dixon's line and eighty-nine percent. south of it.

At this conference, with the wisdom which characterized Francis Asbury's appointments, the thirty-seven assistants were stationed at strategic points. Endowed by nature with a broad and comprehensive mind, he was able to consider a movement, a position, or a man with reference not only to local and transient, but to permanent and general, relations.

The Juniata circuit appears in the minutes. It covered a large region in the Tuscarora Mountains. Methodists had been scattered through that country from the earliest times. A local preacher named Crider had settled near the present town of Huntington, and founded a society. Robert Pennington had migrated from Delaware and settled in Center County, where he built a log chapel among the mountains, known seventy-five years afterward as "Father Pennington's Church."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Sketches of Life and Travels of Thomas Ware."

<sup>2</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church."



Wilson Lee, who joined the conference in 1784, was sent to the Alleghany circuit, situated among the mountains of that name; its limits were not fixed, and during the year 1784 he crossed and recrossed those lofty ranges many times.

William Glendenning, one of the preachers, had been devising a plan to lay Asbury aside, or at least to abridge his powers. Asbury records this fact, and also that "Mr. Wesley's letter settled the point, and all was happy."<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the conference adjourned Asbury, as usual, began his travels. On the first day of July he began to ascend the Alleghany Mountains, following the route that Braddock took. The population was sparse, and on halting for the night he was obliged to occupy a bed with two other persons. He averaged thirty miles a day, preaching as he went. After traversing that region he turned toward Philadelphia, reaching the quarterly meeting on the 21st of July, still preaching almost daily. On Sunday, the 15th of August, he was so weak as to have to lie down the greater part of the day on the floor, but arose at the appointed time and preached to a thousand persons; rode the next day twenty miles to Burlington, and the next to Trenton, delivering sermons at both places.

Visiting the city of New York, he was much pleased, and records what he saw with unusual enthusiasm: "At New York we found the people alive to God; there are about one hundred in society, and, with those in Philadelphia, to my mind appear more like Methodists than I have ever yet seen them." This improvement was to be traced chiefly to the ability, system, and fidelity of John Dickins.

The strength of the convictions produced by the early Methodists, and their absorption in their work, cannot be

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 473.

better illustrated than by an entry made by Asbury during this tour in Maryland: "Here B. T., who was a great churchman, after hearing Freeborn Garrettson a second time, was seized with conviction on his way home, and fell down in the road, and spent a great part of the night crying to God for mercy. It was suggested to him that his house was on fire. His answer was, 'It is better for me to lose my house than my soul.'"

Having crossed into Virginia, Asbury in five succeeding days rode one hundred miles, spent five hours in public discourses and ten in family and public prayer, and read two hundred pages in Young's works. On Sunday, the 7th, he rode twelve miles to Snow Hill, Md., where the judge himself opened the court-house, and a large congregation of different denominations attended. Asbury's theme was "The Certainty, Universality, and Justice of God's Proceedings at the Day of Judgment." After seven days more of travel he reached Barrett's Chapel.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BLENDED ROMANCE AND REALITY.

METHODISM had now for eighteen years run like a fire to and fro in this continent, here through dry stubble, there almost quenched in swamps and along watercourses, again kindled at distant points by wind-blown sparks, until the land was dotted with societies, none of which dared to call themselves churches, and whose members were without the sacraments except as they received them from clergymen of the Church of England, who in many instances regarded them with indifference or contempt. Eighty-three called themselves preachers; none dared to style himself a minister. The term "pastor" was not in use among Methodists, nor were those now familiar words "deacon" and "elder" heard except in ecclesiastical controversies. A large proportion of the members had not been baptized.

The doctrines which these men preached were the same that those who had brought Methodism to this country had heard from Wesley and the few clergymen who sympathized with him, and his lay helpers; the experience to which they testified was the direct result of a firm belief in these doctrines; the spirit they manifested was the compound result of their belief in certain principles, and of the Holy Ghost, who produced his special fruits, which reflection and mere belief cannot originate or sus-

tain: "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Methodists, lay and clerical, who had experienced what they professed hated evil and loved good with the same intensity; hence they were equally powerful in preaching against sin, guiding those who "would see Jesus," and quickening and edifying believers.

In endeavoring to understand the method and spirit of Methodism and their effects, we may follow one of these as he goes forth from a conference to his "appointment." He is without money or friends, and does not expect to find either church, society, choir, or salary, but has been told that at a certain point seventy-five miles on the way Brother B—— lives. After journeying until his horse and himself are weary and famished, he asks a mild-mannered man, whose house is by the roadside, where he attends church, and is met with cordiality and invited to share the frugal meal of the family. Seated at the table, having made his calling known, he may be asked to invoke the divine blessing; if so, he does it with an unction never before heard by his host, using an ordinary meal as a symbol of the bread that cometh down from above. If not asked he volunteers, and even greater fervor may characterize him under these circumstances. The dinner over, he begins to speak individually to the family on the subject of their souls' salvation. Some listen from mere curiosity; perhaps only one shows genuine interest; but he seeks an opportunity to pray, and before the prayer is ended all feel that a strange, even an awful, visitor has come among them.

Imagination predominates in new countries. Intelligence from the outer world seldom reaches the people; sermons are few and far between, often dull and sometimes frivolous. But here is a man who affirms what he knows,

and feels as one might be expected to feel if what he preaches is true. He sings a hymn which expresses the feelings of the one or more affected by the truth, and as the plaintive strain rises on the air those who have any appreciation of music gather about; some that were disposed to ridicule him are impressed, and the children are fascinated.

If these results follow he is asked to come again. Such may be the influence of his words and songs that the host offers the use of his house for a service; the neighbors are notified, and it would be strange if two or three were not convicted and converted that very night. These are at once formed into a class, the most intelligent invested with the responsibility of leadership, and instructions given him.

He inquires the way to the residence of the brother to whom he is to report. His host replies that he has heard of him, that he is a good man, who has peculiar ideas of religion and will not have any profane swearers about his farm, which is thirty miles distant. Whereupon the preacher informs him that the views which he has been teaching there are those held by Brother B——.

Counting B——'s house the center and this the circumference of his circuit, the preacher is filled with joy. His cordial reception he accepts as a seal to his ministry. God is with him. Had he, however, been driven away, had he been beaten with many stripes, he would have been equally convinced that God was with him, and would have proceeded on his pilgrimage singing and giving thanks that he was permitted to partake of the afflictions of Christ, and a score of times before his weary body found rest that night he would repeat to himself, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."

When he arrives at Brother B——'s the people are assembled, the preacher welcomed, and his opening discourse

on some such passage as "I seek not yours, but *you*," is followed by a stirring account of the grace of God, which was magnified the night before, when he, a weary, lonely stranger, who had to say to the people as Peter said to the lame beggar, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee," was permitted to unfold to their astonished gaze the pearl of great price.

Such joyful news quickens the faith and enlarges the hope of every one present. He has also a message for those who have been attracted by curiosity. "Behold," he exclaims, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" But if there be a single scoffer he may exclaim, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

In less than four weeks in his circuit of sixty miles in diameter he has preached fifty sermons, formed ten classes, made hundreds of visits, and erected family altars in more than fifty houses. He writes to the nearest assistant, giving an account of the wonderful work of God and asking for a visit.

It is remarkable that among the twelve apostles of our Lord there was no similarity, except that of a common human nature; and at least as many as twelve distinct types can be traced among the eighty-three preachers who had assembled in the Conference of 1784. Four of these are worthy of special characterization.

Benjamin Abbott was born in New Jersey. In his boyhood he was apprenticed in Philadelphia, but immediately fell into bad company, indulging in card-playing, cock-fighting, and other evil habits, so that his master and he separated before his time had expired. He then went to New Jersey and worked on a farm owned by one of his brothers. He married, and, receiving a small amount of

money from his father's estate, rented a farm, which he cultivated. He worked hard and earned a comfortable support, but lived in open rebellion against God, drinking, fighting, swearing, and gambling.

He continued in a life of sin, though often, in meetings which he attended, alarmed by the Spirit of God, until the fortieth year of his life. His wife was a member of the Presbyterian Church, and in the habit of prayer. He respected her highly, but she did not profess to have any internal religious experience. Abbott subsequently said that till he met the Methodists he "had never heard either a man or a woman say that they had a pardoning love of God in their souls, or knew their sins were forgiven."

Like Joseph, Abbott was a dreamer, and frequently had visions in which he saw himself dead and doomed. For a while he would reform, but his impressions would wear off and he would return to his former practices.

Reports of a Methodist preacher's expected coming to the town attracted his attention; he went to hear him, and was deeply convicted of sin. Abbott's own words concerning this event are graphic:

"But I knew not the way to Christ for refuge, being ignorant of the nature both of conviction and conversion. But, blessed be God, he still gave me light, so that the work was deepened in my soul day by day. The preacher came to preach in our neighborhood, and I went to hear him again; it being a new thing in the place brought many together to hear him. Some were Presbyterians, some Baptists, and others without any professions of religion. He took his text and preached with power; the Word reached my heart in such a powerful manner that it shook every joint in my body; tears flowed in abundance, and I cried out for mercy, of which the people took notice,

and many others were melted into tears. When the sermon was over the people flocked around the preacher and began to dispute with him about principles of religion. I said that there never was such preaching as this, but the people said, 'Abbott is going mad.' " <sup>1</sup>

Thoughts of suicide often came to him. At night in a lonely wood he determined upon the act, but while searching for a suitable place he was deterred by an inward voice, which said, "This torment is nothing compared to hell." He drove home in greatest anxiety, imagining the tempter directly behind him. While listening to a Methodist preacher he became excited and cried, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" Then shame overcame him, and he felt that his neighbors despised him. At the close, however, he would have spoken to the preacher, but the latter was surrounded by a crowd disputing points of doctrine. That evening he established family prayer, greatly pleasing his wife. The next day he drove twelve miles to a Methodist meeting, and asked the preacher to baptize him, hoping this would banish his distress, for he had as yet no idea of justification by faith. In answer to a question he said to the preacher, "I am nothing but a poor, wretched, condemned sinner." The preacher comforted him with the promises of the gospel, told him that he was the one for whom Christ died or he would not have awakened him, and commanded him to believe.

In the night he woke from a troubled dream, and seemed to see the Lord Jesus with extended arms saying, "I died for you." In his journal he describes the effect: "The Scriptures were wonderfully opened to my understanding. . . . My heart felt as light as a bird, being relieved of that load of guilt which before had weighed down

<sup>1</sup> "Experience and Gospel Labors of the Rev. Benjamin Abbott," by John Firth (Philadelphia, 1825).



my spirits, and my body felt as active as when I was eighteen, so that the outward and inward man were both animated."

He explained the Scriptures to the family, and spent the day in telling all what God had done for him. The effect was thrilling. Some laughed, others cried, and a report was spread that he was "raving mad." A minister tried to deliver him from "the strong delusions of the devil," and Abbott began to think he might be right, but turned a little out of the road, knelt down in the wood, and prayed that if he was deceived God would undeceive him; and God said to him, "Why do you doubt? Is not Christ sufficient? Is he not able? Have you not felt his blood applied?"

Some time afterward he dreamed that he saw the preacher under whom he was awakened drunk and playing cards, his garments torn and defiled. He awoke and found it only a dream, but in three weeks learned that this man, having fallen into gross sins, had been expelled from the Connection. This was the first expulsion from the Methodist ministry. Abbott was sorely tempted, but while praying this passage of Scripture came to him, "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh."

He now began to study the Bible. His wife closely watched him, and after some months she was genuinely converted under the preaching of Philip Gatch, and cried out, "Now I know what you told me is true, for the Lord hath pardoned my sins!"

The accounts of the results of Abbott's preaching are almost incredible. He obtained impressions and coined astonishing sentences as he preached. Once he cried out, "For aught I know there may be a murderer in this congregation." A man arose to leave the house, but fell, crying out that it was he, for he had killed a man fifteen years before.

Multitudes that had heard Abbott swear and had seen him fight would now come to hear him preach. He was equally powerful in preaching to the whites, the Indians, and the negroes. Hundreds fell unconscious under his preaching. It was a common thing for scoffers, as he looked at them and denounced their iniquities, to fall prostrate.

His fame crossed the Atlantic, and philosophers and medical men in England discussed the question of his sanity. Southey<sup>1</sup> says: "Benjamin Abbott not only threw his hearers into fits, but often fainted himself through the vehemence of his own prayers and preachments."

One day he went to a funeral where hundreds were collected. A clergyman of the English church read the liturgy, and then preached "a short, easy, smooth, soft sermon." A terrible thunder-storm was gathering, and huge clouds met over the house, which caused all the people to crowd into it, upstairs and down, to screen themselves from the storm. The minister asked Abbott if he would say something to the people. He rose upon one of the benches, and almost as soon as he began tremendous claps of thunder, exceeding anything that the people had ever heard, succeeded one another with appalling rapidity, and incessantly lightning flashed through the house in a terrifying manner. Abbott preached upon the judgment; setting before the people "the awful coming of Christ in all his splendor, with all the armies of heaven, to judge the world and to take vengeance on the ungodly." This storm continued above an hour, during the whole of which time he was appealing to the people, who screamed and clung to one another in mortal terror. Many were converted, and fourteen years afterward there were in that vicinity twelve witnesses of unimpeachable character who testified that their awakening was due to that sermon.

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Wesley," vol. ii., p. 261.

On one occasion the daughter of a Quaker was earnestly crying for purity of heart. Her father came into the room and reminded Mr. Abbott that the Lord is not in the earthquake nor in the whirlwind, but in the still, small voice. He replied, "Do you know what the earthquake means? It is the mighty thunder of God's voice from Mount Sinai; it is the divine law to drive us to Christ. And the whirlwind is the power of conviction, like the rushing of a mighty wind, tearing away every false hope, and stripping us of every plea, but, 'Give me Christ or else I die!'"

Southey<sup>1</sup> devotes three pages to Benjamin Abbott; and with reference to his reply to the Quaker, Samuel Taylor Coleridge says: "And pertinently; though it would perhaps have been a reply better suited to the reprover had Abbott said, 'True, friend! but yet it was by God's ordinance that the earthquake and the whirlwind should go before the still, small voice.'"

Benjamin Abbott was an enthusiast, but neither a fanatic nor a lunatic. Considered in connection with his early life, the circumstances of his conversion, his temperament, and the view he took of the perils of the unsaved, of divine providence, the life of the apostles, and the power of the Holy Ghost, there appears a logical consistency between his methods and themes and the effects he sought to produce. While he believed that the power which prostrated men was the direct operation of God, he distinguished between those physical effects and the moral transformation produced by the Spirit in conviction, conversion, and sanctification. In the midst of the uproar he would cry, "Saul also was among the prophets, but what became of Saul? Break off your iniquities by repentance!"

Abbott arrived at Judge White's house, where he met

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Wesley," vol. ii.

Asbury and a score of other preachers. They were astonished at his simplicity and power. His sermon in the chapel was overwhelming. Some sank to the floor, others fled from the place. Asbury sent him to the house of a neighboring gentleman for lodging during the night; but there while at family prayers three persons fell as dead under the singing of the hymn, one being the hostess herself, and under the prayer several others were prostrated; and the host himself, who had become a backslider, was restored. Three hours had passed before their mingled prayers and praises ceased.

John Dickins was in several particulars an entire contrast to this man: a good scholar in English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and mathematics; sensible; conscientious; a marvelous disciplinarian, uniting firmness with discrimination; a systematic expounder of the Word of God, yet with extraordinary cumulative unction in its application; an ecclesiastical legislator who without the loss of spirituality apprehended the relation of a religious community to the development of the New World.

Caleb B. Pedicord, who entered the ministry in 1773, is introduced by Ledlum to his readers thus:<sup>1</sup> "Those who have seen Mr. Pedicord have testified to the beauty of his person, and this casket contained a jewel of the finest polish." He was a quiet, pathetic preacher, and probably converted under the preaching of Robert Strawbridge, as he was a native of Maryland. His life was spent in that State, Delaware, New Jersey, and vicinity. Early in his ministry he was "baptized unto Christ in blood," for soon after he began to preach he was assaulted on the highway in Dorchester County, Maryland, and beaten till the blood flowed. He found shelter in a neighboring house, and while his wounds were being washed a brother of the man

<sup>1</sup> Stevens, vol. ii., p. 201.

who had beaten him came in, and, learning the facts, mounted his horse, overtook his brother, and chastised him so severely that he promised never to molest another itinerant. Pedicord bore to his grave the scars received on that occasion.

Quiet as he was, he was able to encourage the thunderer, Abbott, whom he found thoroughly discouraged in 1781 on a new circuit. Abbott's account so distressed him that he could not eat his breakfast, but retired to pray. In a few moments he returned and exclaimed, "This people will yet hunger and thirst for the Word of God," a prediction that was fulfilled in a few months by an amazing revival. Whether he sang or preached, his voice was probably never surpassed in influence over the hearer.

He was riding one evening to an appointment in Mount Holly, and not supposing that any one was within hearing, was singing:

I cannot, I cannot forbear  
 These passionate longings for home;  
 Oh, when shall my spirit be there?  
 Oh, when will the messenger come?

Thomas Ware, a young man who had served in the Revolutionary army, was wandering in an adjacent forest, and "was deeply touched not only with the melody of his voice, which was among the best he ever heard, but with the words, especially the last couplet." "After he ceased," says Ware, "I went out and followed him a great distance, hoping he would begin again. He, however, stopped at the house of a Methodist and dismounted. I then concluded he must be a Methodist preacher and would probably preach that evening." That evening Ware heard him and entered into light.

He soon began to speak in public. Pedicord perceived the characteristics which made Ware afterward one

of the most successful of preachers for fifty years, a founder of the denomination from New Jersey to Tennessee, from Massachusetts to the Carolinas, and by his pen one of the best contributors to its early history.<sup>1</sup>

Pedicord wrote to Ware from Delaware, summoning him to the ministry. No history of American Methodism can be complete without this letter:

“He who claims all souls as his own and wills them to be saved does sometimes, from the common walks of life, choose men who have learned of him to be lowly in heart, and bids them go and invite the world to the great supper. The Lord is at this time carrying on a great and glorious work, chiefly by young men like yourself. Oh, come and share in the happy toil and in the great reward! Mark me! though seven winters have now passed over me, and much of the way has been dreary enough, yet God has been with me and kept me in the way, and often whispered, ‘Thou art mine, and all I have is thine.’ He has, moreover, given me sons, and daughters too, born not of the flesh but of God; and who can estimate the joy I have in one destined, I hope, to fill my place in the itinerant ranks when I am gone! Who then will say that mine was not a happy lot? ’Tis well you have made haste; much more than I can express have I wished you in the ranks before mine eyes have closed in death on all below. When Asbury pressed me to become an itinerant I said, ‘God has called me to preach, and woe unto me if I preach not;’ but I had no conviction that he had called me to itinerate. ‘No conviction, my son,’ said he to me sternly, ‘that you should follow the direction of Him who commissioned you to preach? Has the charge given to the disciples, “Go and evangelize the world,” been revoked? Is the world evangelized?’ He said no more. I looked at

<sup>1</sup> Stevens’s ‘History of the Methodist Episcopal Church,’ vol. ii.

the world; it was not evangelized. The world must be evangelized; it should long since have been so, had all who professed to be ministers of Christ been such as were the first gospel preachers and professors; for who can contend with him who is Lord of lords and King of kings when they that are with him in the character of ministers and members are called and chosen and faithful? Here the drama ends not; but the time, we think, is near—even at the door. Nothing can kill the itinerant spirit which Wesley has inspired. It has lived through the Revolutionary War, and will live through all future time. Christendom will become more enlightened, will feel a divine impulse, and a way will be cast up on which itinerants may swiftly move, and in sufficient numbers to teach all nations the commands of God.”

Pedicord was constantly subject to dejection. Once he concluded that he was not called to preach, and was about to return home, but happened to meet an aged colored woman, who told him that what he had said on a former occasion had been the means of awakening her and of bringing her to God. This dissipated his fears and doubts, for said he, “I thought it was better to gain one soul to Christ than to acquire all the riches of the world.”

Jesse Lee was converted in Virginia in 1773 under the preaching of Robert Williams. His parents had opened their house for preaching, and they and their children were converted. Two of the sons became ministers. Jesse Lee developed untiring zeal, traveling on foot day and night to reach the various meetings of the extensive circuit. He was familiar with the extraordinary scenes that took place on the Brunswick circuit under the preaching of George Shadford, where “it was quite common for sinners to be seized with a trembling and shaking, and from that to fall down on the floor as if they were dead; and many have been

convulsed from head to foot, while others have retained the use of their tongues so as to pray for mercy while they were lying helpless on the ground or floor. The Christians, too, were sometimes so overcome with the presence and love of God as not to be able to stand on their feet."<sup>1</sup>

He continued to increase in fervor, as that general revival advanced, until 1777, when he removed to North Carolina. Previously, being very diffident, he had declined to speak in public, but there among strangers he gained more courage, and was soon appointed class-leader, then exhorter, and in 1779 preached his first sermon.

In 1780 he was drafted into the Revolutionary army. Then occurred a singular struggle. As a Christian and a preacher of the gospel he could not reconcile himself to kill one of his fellow-creatures or to bear arms. He determined, however, to go and to trust in the Lord. He was two weeks on the journey to the camp, and on the evening that he came in sight of it he prayed God to take his case in hand and support him in the test of his conscience. He was ordered on parade. The sergeant offered him a gun; he refused it. The lieutenant brought another; he would not take it. The lieutenant reported him to the colonel, and again presented the gun, but Lee refused to touch it. He was therefore delivered to the guard. The colonel remonstrated with him, but, being unable to move him, he was considered to be a fanatic or a lunatic, and left to himself. He began immediately to pray with the guard, and such was the influence of his praying and preaching that the people gathered around him to the number of hundreds. Soldiers brought straw, overcoats, and blankets for his bedding. He slept a few hours and then rose and began to sing. An innkeeper in the neighborhood heard him praying early in the morning, and besought him

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," p. 53.



to preach. He stood upon a bench and preached near the tent of the commanding officer. Great was the excitement, and before he finished officers as well as men were bathed in tears. Gentlemen went about to make a collection of money for him, at which Lee ran among the people begging them to desist.

The colonel had a long talk with him, and wished him to say what he could do, as they did not desire to oppress him. He replied that he was a friend to his country, and was ready to do anything he could for it except fighting. He was asked if he would be willing to drive the baggage-wagon. He said he would. Then the colonel told him that their chief cook was a Methodist, and he could drive the wagon when upon the march, and might ride and eat with him; to this Lee agreed, whereupon he was released from guard. He remained in the army for four months, doing this work, and preaching whenever he could obtain an opportunity.

He was not ready, however, to become an itinerant preacher, but visited the Conference of 1782, at the close of which Asbury inquired if he was willing to take a circuit. He declined, but intimated that he was at a loss what to do; that he feared that he was incompetent and would hurt the cause. Asbury, perceiving a number of the preachers standing in the yard, raised his voice and cried, "I am going to enlist Brother Lee!" Familiar with Lee's career in the army, one of them said, "What bounty do you give?" and Asbury replied, "Grace here and glory hereafter will be given him if he is faithful."

The influence of his preaching was equally great upon himself and upon the people. They would weep until he could not be heard, and at times he would weep and be utterly unable to speak. On such an occasion he said, "I found that love had tears as well as grief."

He became one of the most versatile orators and conversers, alike at home in pathos, humor, and wit. Ware says that he preached with more ease than any other man he knew. In repartee he was never surpassed, and his moral courage, as exhibited in the army, was unbounded.

In their respective types these were the most eminent of the early Methodist preachers. With all their diversity there was a remarkable unity in doctrine, spirit, and experience; and, if there was variety in method, there was no mistaking a Methodist preacher or a Methodist for a communicant of any other denomination. When members of other bodies associated frequently with Methodists, caught their spirit and expressed their experiences in similar language, if they were mistaken for Methodists it was because the characteristics of the latter had obscured those of the communions in which they were trained.

Preachers of such marked types impressed upon the more plastic of their converts their own peculiarities; but in every revival, and almost in every class-meeting, some Christian arose who could never be an imitator, and unhampered by conventionalism or unchecked except in a general way by rules and rites formed under the operation of its semi-military discipline, or by the strong hand of its administrators. The ebullitions of zeal and peculiarities of expression of such Methodists gave to each local society, and to at least one local preacher on every circuit, a power of attraction which kept every community in a state of expectancy of something new and startling. Some of these eccentric characters were among the best men connected with the movement.

As they grew older their idiosyncrasies became less distinct, their exuberance of expression was chastened,

but their zeal remained, and having begun as collectors of materials for wiser workmen they themselves became master builders.

The demonstrations which followed the preaching of Abbott, took place under that of Williams, were seen, in fact, wherever a genuine Methodist preached, for a time caused much controversy. By many, perhaps by most, Methodists they were supposed to be direct results of the power of the Holy Spirit, and manifest proofs of His presence and approval of the work. By a few their absence was construed into evidence of the disfavor of God and believed to be the result of backsliding. Some stigmatized those demonstrations as wild fanaticism, and others denounced them as hypocrisy.

Some constructed a theory to explain them on the hypothesis that they followed only exciting preachers like Abbott; but this was a baseless assumption. They occurred under the preaching of John Wesley, argumentative, precise, and logical, rarely losing his self-possession, not given to tears, before they appeared under George Whitefield. They also took place under the reading of the logical and metaphysical discourses of Jonathan Edwards. They defied the denunciations, threatenings, and appeals of Thomas Rankin, who abominated them as disorder. Another remarkable fact was that skeptics and opponents were as liable as others to succumb, so that it became dangerous for such in the pursuit of their inquiries to draw near to those who were engaging in prayer or to approach too near the fervent preacher.

By their recognition as proper, license was given to the fanatic and the impostor. The latter might seek to win the confidence of preachers and people by the loudness of his cries, the vehemence of his gestures, or his seeming unconsciousness; the former might mistake the condition

into which he passed for the power of God, the seal of the divine approbation, and the evidence that he had passed from darkness into light.

To those who search for an explanation of these phenomena, the fact that they have occurred under all forms of religion, true and false, is in importance second only to the fact that many of the subjects underwent no moral change, and that many who experienced the most radical moral changes were not subject to such seizures.

The psychological key to the problem is that concentrated attention, accompanied by strong religious emotion, produces a powerful impression upon the nervous system, the result being an agitation of the nerves throughout the body, the effects of which differ according to the constitution of the subject. In one relief is found in floods of tears, in another in hysterical laughter, in a third by unconsciousness, in a fourth by a partial loss of muscular action, with marked effects upon the operations of the mind; in yet another complete catalepsy may be produced, every muscle becoming rigid and so remaining for hours, while no impression can be made by ordinary means upon either the senses or the mind; in still another involuntary motions may be constantly made, lasting for hours together; while some temperaments can bear religious or any other kind of emotion without outward excitement and with no indication except an unusual calmness. These differences of susceptibility are seen outside the sphere of religion, and even among members of the same family.

It is also a law that the perception of the effects of emotion and proximity to those who are under the power thereof will produce upon many effects similar to those manifested before them, so that they will weep when others weep even though in no way related to the cause

of grief. Thus great panics arise, and mental and moral epidemics. Thus crowds are transformed into murderous mobs, guilty of deeds from which every individual when alone would have shrunk. Thus, in wild alarm, armies have been stampeded before forces which they could have overthrown without difficulty had they made a stand. It is not, however, so generally known that any special form of manifestation may become epidemic if believed to have a divine or even a naturally necessary origin, and be indefinitely repeated. This explains the permanence of different types, such as the Jumpers in Wales, the Jerks in the Southwestern States, the quaking from which the Friends received the name now generally applied to them, and, in a modified form, the tones of different denominations, many of whose members, without being aware of it, never speak upon the subject of religion except with the inflections and intonations which were common in the earlier and more susceptible period of the history of the body.

Wise administrators would not suppress tears under the preaching of the gospel, even in excess, lest the direction of the consciousness of the individual to his own state should divert his attention from the Word of God. In like manner, should such extraordinary results seem to follow the preaching of the gospel, only in extreme cases would it be wise to check them arbitrarily, since private instruction and an infusion of calmness into the manner of the minister would be adequate to preserve decorum and check fanaticism and make the rôle of the impostor more difficult.

The system of discipline adopted by the Methodists rested upon both a Scriptural and a philosophical basis. Converts were received on *probation*, and regular meetings were held for examination and instruction; consistency of conduct was required; exhorters and local preachers

were *licensed*; where outward excitement predominated over inward spiritual grace, the subjects thereof were re-proved, and if any became so boisterous as to defeat the end for which the services were held they were removed. Of such, when not suspected of imposture, Wesley was accustomed to write, "Oh, honest heart, but poor head!" and of those who plainly gave themselves up to rhapsodies as to a kind of luxury he said, "They are froth without substance."

Various factors were involved in producing the effects of Methodist preaching and methods: the personal influence of the preachers, exerted through their testimony, example, conversation, oratory, and discipline; the contact of the members in social life and in the almost continuous meetings; the hymns and prayers, and the reflex action of all upon each and of each upon all; the power of truth relative to the moral condition and needs of the hearer, and the tremendous concentrated effect of fixed ideas as the work spread and assemblies increased until they became vast open-air congresses; and under peculiarly favorable circumstances a new power was developed, resembling, in germs, the influence of smaller meetings, but so magnified as to seem almost a different force.

Beyond and above all this was the might of the Holy Spirit. Without His aid great results might have followed, a powerful organization have been formed, many reformations of outer life effected. But profound modifications of character, amazing developments of courage, and the almost ceaseless flow, through a long life, of religious joy approaching ecstasy, triumphing over the infirmities of the body, dissipating dejection, and often exhibited most overwhelmingly when mere human elements would have been wholly ineffectual to sustain it; and the preservation and growth of the fruits of the Spirit, and

their correspondence with the plain teachings of God's Word, constitute proof of the divine origin of the movement as conclusive as that furnished when holy men of old spake not of themselves, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

There were not wanting those who constructed finely woven theories to explain the results of Methodist preaching upon natural principles, and there were others who denied that these principles had any influence. Both were in error; the former by predicating of nature effects that it never did or could produce, the latter by denying to nature the vast power which really exists to create influences which seem to many to be supernatural. Had there been no influence beyond unassisted nature neither Christianity nor Methodism as a spiritual system could have become permanent. The Scriptures uniformly represent all the affections peculiar to the Christian life as fruits of the Spirit, teaching that spiritual regeneration is necessary to entering the kingdom of God. Certain truths are revealed and certain effects predicated through the operation of the Holy Spirit. All true Christians know that for a considerable period they reflected upon the letter of spiritual truth with little or no feeling. Many had been instructed in the principles of religion and might have written essays or prepared discourses on the most spiritual doctrines, but were without deep emotions. At intervals they were self-condemned and occasionally yearned for union with God, but as a rule they had no religious feeling—at least, none higher than admiration and esteem for the principles of truth in which they had been instructed. There came, however, a period when the deepest emotions of penitence filled their souls. This was succeeded by joyous hope and a strong and lasting inclination of their hearts toward the truth.

None ever attained these fruits of the Spirit who sought them in the firm belief that they are simply natural results of reflection; nor could any one, upon the assumption that all that was necessary would be for him to think and converse and right feelings would arise in his soul, succeed in attaining the experience of the Christian. If men did not need spiritual influences they would require only truth and examples for imitation; their feelings would spontaneously follow and concur with their views of truth. The teaching of the Holy Spirit is that He, and He alone, reëstablishes and maintains the connection between the views and the feelings, so that the heart loves and cleaves to what the judgment approves.

Wherever the truth is preached the Holy Spirit strives to affect human hearts, and if those who listen yield, all the emotions which God approves and desires to produce spring up. If, however, the Spirit is quenched, there remain only the simple intellectual processes of thought, without radical changes of character. In that condition all natural effects may be produced. The man whose will does not submit to the will of God may become the subject of epidemic feeling and sink under what he believes to be the power of God.

Wesley and his followers were charged with teaching that the mind has an inward feeling which enables it to perceive the ordinary influences of God's Spirit so as to discern from whence they come. The Rev. Dr. Rutherford, a distinguished clergyman of the Church of England, wrote a treatise in 1763, one of the chapters of which was entitled "An Examination of the Doctrines of the Methodists Concerning Inward Feelings." Wesley saw it first in 1768 and immediately answered it. As few writers on the more extraordinary phenomena of Methodism appear to have read this elaborate discussion, and as it is one of the best



examples of the clear distinctions which Wesley made and insisted upon, it is important to introduce certain passages:

“You state the question thus: ‘Have we any reason to believe that the mind has an inward feeling which will enable it to perceive the ordinary influences of God’s Spirit so as to discern from whence they come?’ (p. 15).

“I answer: (1) The fruit of his ordinary influences are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness. (2) Whoever has these, inwardly feels them, and if he understands his Bible he discerns from whence they come. Observe, what he inwardly feels is these fruits themselves; whence they come he learns from the Bible. . . .

“5. Mr. W. indeed ‘endeavors to explain away the doctrine of the Methodists concerning inward feelings’ (p. 25). That is, I plainly tell what I mean by those expressions. My words run thus: ‘By feeling I mean being inwardly conscious of; by the operations of the Spirit I do not mean the manner in which he operates, but the graces which he operates, in a Christian.’ And again: ‘We believe that love, joy, peace, are inwardly felt or they have no being, and that men are satisfied they have grace, first by feeling these and afterward by their outward actions.’ . . .

“6. But you will pin it upon me, whether I will or no, and that by three passages of my own writings: (1) ‘Lucy Godshall felt the love of God in an unusual manner.’ She did. I mean in an unusual degree. And what will you make of this? (2) ‘When he examined some of his disciples, and they related their “feeling the blood of Christ running upon their arms, or going down their throats, or poured like water upon their breast and heart,” did he tell them that these circumstances were all the dreams of a heated imagination?’ I did; I told them that these three circumstances, and several others of the same kind,

were mere dreams, though some of those which they then related might be otherwise. I will tell you more: I was so disgusted at them for those dreams that I expelled them out of the society.

“The third passage is this: ‘We do speak of grace (meaning thereby the power of God, which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure) that it is as perceptible to the heart, while it confirms, refreshes, purifies, and sheds the love of God abroad therein, as sensible objects are to the senses’ (p. 27). I do speak thus; and I mean thereby that the comfort which God administers, not his power distinct from it, the love and purity which he works, not his act of working distinguished from it, are as clearly discernible by the soul as outward objects by the senses. And I never so much as dreamed that any one could find any other meaning in the words.”<sup>1</sup>

In this early period of American Methodism the consummate wisdom of Francis Asbury, fully equal to that displayed by John Wesley, in distributing men of different gifts in suitable succession, was exhibited. After a few months under the influence of an evangelist of quenchless zeal a sound administrator was placed over the society, and the evangelist sent to a people where backsliding had occurred because the enemy had sown tares. No general ever stationed his troops with greater skill than Asbury displayed in the adjustment of ministerial supplies to the infant societies. He knew whom to trust, and, ceaselessly moving among the people, made changes without regard to the limitation of time, composed feuds by authority and counsels, rekindled dying interest or quenched the flames of fanaticism, extricated a brother from the consequences of his own imprudence or delivered a society from the control of an indiscreet administrator.

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's "Works," vol. vii., pp. 498-500.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THOMAS COKE, LL.D., accompanied by Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, sailed on the 18th of September, 1784, from Bristol, England, for New York.

Coke may with propriety be styled Wesley's minister plenipotentiary to American Methodism. He was a native of South Wales, an only child, and while an infant was bereaved of his father, an eminent surgeon who had several times filled the office of chief magistrate of his town. He was somewhat frivolous while a youth, but was not immoral and observed the outward forms of religion. When but sixteen he was entered a "gentleman commoner" at Jesus College in Oxford University, and was shocked by the looseness of life and the skepticism which prevailed at that seat of learning, but "by slow and imperceptible degrees he became a captive to those snares of infidelity which he had at first surveyed with detestation and horror."<sup>1</sup>

He pursued a career of dissipation and folly, but was preserved from gross sins. From infidelity he was rescued by a powerful sermon preached by one who confessed to him that he did not believe the doctrines he had been defending. Such base inconsistency disgusted Coke and

<sup>1</sup> Drew's "Life of Coke," (American edition, 1818).

opened his eyes to the terrible consequences of rejecting the Word of God. He turned to the Dissertations of Bishop Sherlock, by reading which he was made a Christian in theory; and a treatise on "Regeneration" by Dr. Witherspoon kindled within him an intense desire to become a spiritual disciple.

At twenty-one he was chosen a common councilman for the borough of Brecon, a position which his father had held; and at twenty-five was elected chief magistrate, discharging the duties of that office with the highest repute for impartiality and fidelity. He intended to enter holy orders, but desired them rather as a means to promotion than as an opportunity for earnest work in the church of Christ.

The degree of Doctor of Civil Law was conferred upon him by Oxford, after an examination of his qualifications, on the 17th of June, 1775. After several years he was appointed curate at South Petherton, and became an earnest preacher, displaying such power of eloquence that the church could not contain the crowds who sought to enter. He applied to the vestry for a gallery to be erected at the cost of the parish, but the request was refused. Having a fortune of his own, without further consultation he hired tradesmen and built the gallery at his own expense.<sup>1</sup>

At South Petherton he met Thomas Maxfield, a preacher sent out by Wesley, but who was ordained by the Bishop of Londonderry, who used this remarkable language: "Sir, I ordain you to assist that good man [Wesley], that he may not work himself to death."

The reputation of Coke having reached Maxfield, he sought an acquaintance, and explained to the young curate the necessity and nature of conversion, and gave him Alleine's "Alarm to the Unconverted," with the usual consequences. Coke, after becoming the subject of genuine

<sup>1</sup> Drew's "Life of Coke," p. 16.

regeneration, threw away his notes, and a new unction attended his word, so that on the occasion of his first extemporaneous sermon three were awakened. He delivered evening lectures in the villages, and introduced the singing of hymns into the church. Neighboring clergymen were offended at his violation of order and at the drawing away of their hearers. A charge was made against him and formally presented to Bishop Ross, who said that all he could do was to suspend him, which would make him a martyr, and therefore he thought it not best to do it. An accusation was then laid before the Bishop of Bath and Wells, but he confined himself to admonition. Finally the rector of the parish was besought to dismiss him, which he did. To consummate their triumph his enemies actually caused the parish bells "to chime him out of the doors." Coke stood in the street near the church, and when the service closed began to preach. A mob gathered, but two young persons of the best society supported him.

While the fame of these exciting events was spreading, John Wesley appeared not far from South Petherton. His "Journal" of August 18, 1776, says: "I preached at Taunton, and afterward went with Mr. Brown to Kings-ton. Here I found a clergyman, Dr. Coke, late a gentleman commoner of Jesus College in Oxford, who came twenty miles on purpose to meet me. I had much conversation with him, and an union then began which I trust shall never end."<sup>1</sup>

A year later Wesley writes: "I went forward to Taunton with Dr. Coke, who, being dismissed from his curacy, is determined to bid adieu to his honorable name and cast in his lot with us."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Drew's "Life of Coke," p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Wesley's "Works," vol. iv., p. 477.

Coke now became one of the most attractive preachers in England, which is attributed by his biographer, the shrewd and metaphysical Samuel Drew, to his earnestness, activity, piety, unconquerable desire to do good, the melody of his voice, his engaging smile, the clerical character which he sustained, and "the peculiar unction with which God was pleased to attend his word."

Wesley appointed him to superintend the affairs of the London circuit in 1780. Toward the close of the same year Wesley appointed him to visit the societies in Ireland alternately with himself once in every two years, leaving him free to take such journeys in England as prudence might direct.

After Coke left South Petherton a great change took place there in public opinion of him. His opponents everywhere met mournful countenances; "the poor had lost their benefactor, the people their pastor, the sick their comforter, and the wicked the only person that kept them in awe." On his revisiting the place his opponents were the first to chastise their own error. "Well," said they, "we chimed him out, and now we will atone for our folly by ringing him in."

There were in the United Kingdom three hundred and fifty-nine Methodist chapels by the year 1784. Soon after the erection of chapels began Wesley published a "model deed" by which they were to be held. This placed them in the hands of trustees "for the time being," under the restriction that Wesley and such others as he might from time to time appoint were to have free use of the premises to preach therein God's holy Word. If he died the same right was secured to his brother, and if his brother's decease occurred before that of William Grimshaw the same prerogatives were to belong to the latter. But after the three mentioned clergymen these prerogatives were transferred to "the Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists."

In these deeds the proviso was introduced that the said persons appointed by the conference preach no other doctrines than those contained in Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament" and his four volumes of "Sermons."<sup>1</sup>

The deed of John Street Church in the city of New York was drawn up on this model.

But in none of these deeds was "the Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists" defined, nor was there any declaration of the names of those who were then members of the said conference, nor any provision whereby the succession and identity thereof were to be continued. To supply these deficiencies Wesley carefully prepared a "Deed of Declaration," which was "executed on the 28th of February, 1784, and enrolled in the High Court of Chancery." By this deed the legal conference is declared to consist of one hundred preachers, whose names and addresses are given. They and their successors are required forever to assemble once a year. The act of the majority is decreed to be the act of the whole. They are to have the power to fill vacancies. No act shall be valid unless forty be present. The conference shall never sit less than five days nor more than three weeks. Penalties for absence are provided, the power to expel recognized, conditions of admission stipulated, and everything necessary for the continuance of the conference, with final provision that if it "should ever be reduced under the number of forty members and so continue for three years successively, or if the members should decline or neglect to meet together annually during the space of three years, the conference of the people called Methodists should be extinguished, and all its powers, privileges, and advantages shall cease." The sixteenth and final provision was that "nothing in the deed should extinguish or lessen the life-

<sup>1</sup> "Minutes of British Conference," vol. i., p. 41.

estate of the said John Wesley or Charles Wesley, or either of them, in any of the chapels in which they now have or may have any estate or interest, power or authority, whatsoever.”

Thomas Coke, himself a lawyer, had a prominent part in the preparation of the deed. He desired Mr. Clulow, a solicitor of Chancery Lane, to draw a statement of the case of the chapels as they then were, and “to present it to that very eminent counselor, Mr. Maddox, for his opinion.” Maddox replied that the law would not recognize the conference in the state in which it stood at that time, and consequently that there was no central point which might preserve the connection from splitting into a thousand pieces after the death of Mr. Wesley. Dr. Coke read this opinion to the conference in 1783. As soon as that conference was ended Wesley authorized Coke to draw up, with the assistance of Clulow, all the leading parts of a proposed Deed of Declaration.

Coke differed from Wesley upon the question of limiting the number of the preachers to one hundred, and believed that every preacher in full connection should be a member of the conference.

Had the American colonies failed to achieve their independence, for many years—perhaps till now—the government of all the Methodist chapels, remaining in connection with the societies established by Wesley, would be invested in the Yearly Conference, to which would, no doubt, be sent representatives from all parts of the British dominion.

Toward the close of the Revolutionary War Francis Asbury kept John Wesley advised of the progress of events in the United States, and especially dwelt upon the need of the sacraments; thousands of the members had not partaken of the holy communion for years, some indeed never, and their children generally were unbaptized.



He concluded, after protracted reflection, that these societies should be organized into a church under an episcopal form of government, and resolved to confer upon his preachers in the United States authority to ordain deacons and presbyters or elders, to administer the sacraments, and also to ordain superintendents from among the elders.

No single act or series of acts performed by John Wesley exposed him to such animadversion, or occasioned so much discussion, as the preparation which he made for this momentous change in American Methodism.

The documents extant upon this subject demonstrate the conduct of Wesley to be in perfect accord with his principles, often avowed during more than forty years, and never retracted.

What then did Wesley do, and what did he intend to accomplish?

In February, 1784, John Wesley invited Coke into his private chamber, and after some general conversation addressed him in nearly the following manner :

“As the Revolution in America had separated the United States from the mother country forever, and the Episcopal establishment was utterly abolished, the societies had been represented to him in a most deplorable condition. That an appeal had also been made to him through Mr. Asbury, in which he was requested to provide for them some mode of church government suited to their exigencies; and that, having long and seriously revolved the subject in his thoughts, he intended to adopt the plan which he was now about to unfold. That, as he had invariably endeavored in every step he had taken to keep as closely to the Bible as possible, so on the present occasion he hoped he was not about to deviate from it. That, keeping his eye upon the conduct of the primitive churches in the ages of unadulterated Christianity, he had much ad-

mired the mode of ordaining bishops which the church of Alexandria had practiced. That, to preserve its purity, that church would never suffer the interference of a foreign bishop in any of their ordinations; but that the presbyters of that venerable apostolic church, on the death of a bishop, exercised the right of ordaining another from their own body, by the laying on of their own hands, and that this practice continued among them for two hundred years, till the days of Dionysius. And finally, that, being himself a presbyter, he wished Dr. Coke to accept ordination from his hands, and to proceed in that character to the continent of America, to superintend the societies in the United States."<sup>1</sup>

Drew would neither have represented his own composition as a quotation, nor failed to credit this passage to Wesley had it been derived from him; hence it must be Coke's own words.

He was startled by a measure so unprecedented in modern days, and expressed doubts as to the validity of Wesley's authority. In the course of two months, however, he wrote the latter that his objections were silenced; and at the next conference, held in Leeds, 1784, Wesley stated his intentions to the preachers, which he records in his "Journal" as follows: "Being now clear in my own mind, I took a step which I had long weighed in my mind, and appointed Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey to go and serve the desolate sheep in America. Thursday, 2d, I added to them three more, which I verily believe will be much to the glory of God."

When the conference ended Wesley went to Bristol, and Coke to London, to make arrangements for his departure; but he received a letter from Wesley requesting him to

<sup>1</sup> Drew's "Life of Coke," pp. 63, 64.

come at once to Bristol to receive greater powers, and to bring with him Mr. Creighton, a regularly ordained minister, who had long assisted Wesley in London and elsewhere.

At Bristol, Wesley, assisted by Coke and the Rev. James Creighton, ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey presbyters for America, and ordained Coke a superintendent, giving him under his hand and seal this certificate, of which the original, in Wesley's handwriting, is extant:

“ To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting.

“ Whereas many of the people in the Southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the said church; and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers;

“ Know all men, that I, *John Wesley*, think myself to be providentially called, at this time, to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And, therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands and prayer (being assisted by other ordained ministers), Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my

hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

“JOHN WESLEY.”<sup>1</sup>

He then wrote a letter intended to explain the grounds on which he had taken this step, which letter he instructed Coke to print and circulate among the societies upon his arrival in America.

“BRISTOL, September 10, 1784.

“*To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America.*”

“By a very uncommon train of providences many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the mother country and erected into independent States. The English government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice, and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

“Lord King’s account of the primitive church convinced me many years ago that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused; not only for peace’ sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the national church to which I belonged.

<sup>1</sup> Drew’s “Life of Coke,” p. 66. Facsimile of this was exhibited at the first Ecumenical Conference, in London, 1881.

“ But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish minister. So that for some hundreds of miles together there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's right by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

“ I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England (I think the best constituted national church in the world), which I advise all the traveling preachers to use on the Lord's day in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.

“ If any one will point out a more rational and Scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

“ It has indeed been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object: 1. I desired the Bishop of London to ordain one, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them now, they would expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us! 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the state and the

English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.

“JOHN WESLEY.”<sup>1</sup>

Bearing these credentials, Coke and his companions sailed for the United States.

Thirty-eight years before the ordination of Coke Wesley wrote :

“Monday, 20th, 1746, January, I set out for Bristol. On the road I read over Lord King’s account of the primitive church. In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draft ; but if so, it would follow that bishops and presbyters are (essentially) of one order, and that originally every Christian congregation was a church independent of all others!”<sup>2</sup>

Ten years after this entry Wesley wrote to the Rev. Mr. Clarke : “As to my own judgment, I still believe ‘the episcopal form of church government to be Scriptural and apostolic.’ I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But that it is prescribed in Scripture I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet’s ‘Irenicon.’ I think he has unanswerably proved that ‘neither Christ nor his apostles prescribe any particular form of church government ; and that the plea of divine right for diocesan episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive Church.’”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wesley’s “Works,” vol. vii., pp. 311, 312.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 363.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vii., p. 284.

A similar reference to Bishop Stillingfleet was made in a letter, dated April 18, 1761.<sup>1</sup>

Wesley was thoroughly acquainted with the primitive church, and constantly attempted to reproduce it.

The best statement of his position is: "Wesley did not pretend to ordain bishops in the modern sense, but only according to his view of primitive episcopacy, . . . founded upon the principle of bishops and presbyters being of the same *degre*, a more extended *office* only being assigned to the former, as in the primitive church. For, though nothing can be more obvious than that the primitive pastors are called bishops or presbyters indiscriminately in the New Testament, yet at an early period those presbyters were, by way of distinction, denominated bishops, who presided in the meetings of presbyters, and were finally invested with the government of several churches, with their respective presbyteries; so that two *offices* were then, as in this case, grafted upon the same *order*."<sup>2</sup>

The allegation that Wesley was mentally enfeebled by extreme age is unfounded.

Canon Overton's last chapter is entitled "Old Age and Death," for which title he thus apologizes: "In ordinary cases it would be rather late to date the commencement of a man's old age from his eighty-second year; but in this case we rather owe him an apology for venturing to call him an old man so soon. He was still a youth, both in mind and body."<sup>3</sup> And though utterly opposed to Wesley's action, he has the candor to say, "It has been said that John Wesley's mental powers were failing when he began to 'set apart' his preachers; and Charles Wesley himself has countenanced the idea by exclaiming, 'Twas

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's "Works," vol. vii., p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> Watson's "Life of Wesley," p. 247.

<sup>3</sup> Overton's "John Wesley," p. 193.

age that made the breach, not he!' But there really appear to be no traces of mental decay in any other respects."<sup>1</sup>

The simple fact is that for more than forty years Wesley held the views upon which he now acted. He had not, however, applied them in England, for almost, perhaps quite to the last, he hoped that English Methodism would be recognized by the Church of England, in a manner compatible with its continued existence and growth, as a revival of pure Christianity.

The voyage of Coke and his companions was tempestuous, but their course on shipboard resembled that of Wesley in his journey to Georgia many years before. They set apart a given hour for morning prayers, which the sailors attended, and on successive Sundays discourses were preached, which were listened to with earnest attention.

They landed in New York on the 3d of November, and repaired to the residence of a trustee of the John Street Church. John Dickins, the pastor, who had been strenuous in demanding the right to administer the sacraments, was delighted with the purpose of their coming. The same night and for several successive days Coke preached, and then went to Philadelphia, where he was invited to preach in the English churches, receiving calls, among others from Dr. White, afterward bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and also from the governor of the State, whom Coke describes as a "gentlemanly friend to literature, toleration, and to vital Christianity," and "an acquaintance of Wesley, and an admirer of the writings of Fletcher of Madeley."

In Delaware Coke was the guest of Judge Bassett, who, though not a member of the Methodist Society, was erect-

<sup>1</sup> Overton's "John Wesley," p. 206.



ing a chapel at his own expense. On Sunday, the 14th, at Judge Bassett's, he met Freeborn Garrettson, and repaired to a chapel in the midst of a forest, finding a great concourse of people, to whom he preached, afterward administering the "Supper of the Lord" to more than five hundred. It was a Quarterly Meeting, and fifteen preachers were present.

Drew's description of what occurred after the sermon is this: "Scarcely, however, had he finished his sermon before he perceived a plainly dressed, robust, but venerable-looking man moving through the congregation and making his way to the pulpit; on ascending the pulpit, he clasped the doctor in his arms, and, without making himself known by words, accosted him with the holy salutation of primitive Christianity. This venerable man was Mr. Asbury."<sup>1</sup>

These were Asbury's impressions of the interview: "Having had no opportunity of conversing with them before public worship, I was greatly surprised to see Brother Whatcoat assist by taking the cup in the administration of the sacrament. I was shocked when first informed of the intention of these my brethren in coming to this country; it may be of God. My answer then was, if the preachers unanimously choose me, I shall not act in the capacity I have hitherto done by Mr. Wesley's appointment. The design of organizing the Methodists into an Independent Episcopal Church was opened to the preachers present, and it was agreed to call a general conference, to meet at Baltimore the ensuing Christmas."<sup>2</sup>

Freeborn Garrettson was sent "like an arrow over North and South," with instructions to send messengers to right and left, and gather all the preachers in Baltimore on Christmas eve. Asbury drew up for Coke a route of about a thousand miles, to be traversed in the six weeks interven-

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Coke."

<sup>2</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. i., p. 484.

ing, "appropriated an excellent horse to him, and gave him his black, Harry by name." The full name of this brother of African descent was Harry Hosier. Asbury had found him serviceable to himself in many ways, and specially useful by his addresses to those of his own race.

At this their first interview Coke and Asbury agreed to unite their endeavors to establish "a school or college."

Coke traveled from Barrett's Chapel to the residence of Judge White, preaching every day. He utilized "Harry" as a preacher, and writes that he "really believes him one of the best preachers in the world." In this opinion he agreed with Dr. Benjamin Rush, who said, "that, making allowance for his illiteracy (he was unable to read), he was the greatest orator in America."

Thomas Ware remarks of Coke that he "was the best speaker in a private circle or on the conference floor he ever heard, but his voice was too weak to command with ease a very large audience. Scholarly men were delighted with him, and said that he spoke the purest English they ever heard."

Asbury continued his journeys over the Western Shore of Maryland, accompanied by Whatcoat and Vasey. At Abingdon they met Coke, and also William Black, the founder of Methodism in Nova Scotia, who was looking for ministerial help for that province. They arrived at Perry Hall on the 11th of December, with the exception of Whatcoat, who came three days later. On Friday, the 24th of December, 1784, the guests of Perry Hall rode into Baltimore.<sup>1</sup>

Garrettson had been so successful in notifying the preachers of the coming conference and its purpose that

<sup>1</sup> Discrepancies concerning the date of this important event are numerous. Bangs and Wakeley say the 25th, Lee the 27th, and Asbury, Coke, and Whatcoat the 24th.

sixty were present. Wesley's letter having been solemnly read, Asbury records: "It was agreed to form ourselves into an Episcopal Church, and to have superintendents, elders, and deacons."

Lee says that, though Asbury was appointed a superintendent by Wesley, "he would not submit to be ordained unless he could be voted in by the conference; when it was put to vote he was unanimously chosen." Thomas Coke was also unanimously elected a superintendent.

Whatcoat's account is: "We agreed to form a Methodist Episcopal Church, in which the liturgy (as presented by the Rev. John Wesley) *should be read*, and the sacraments be administered by a superintendent, elders, and deacons, who shall be ordained by a presbytery, using the Episcopal form, as prescribed in the Rev. Mr. Wesley's prayer-book. Persons to be ordained are to be named by the superintendent, elected by the conference, and ordained by the imposition of the hand of the superintendent and elders; *the superintendent has a negative voice.*"<sup>1</sup>

Asbury was ordained deacon by Coke, assisted by Vasey and Whatcoat, on the second day of the conference. On Sunday he was ordained an elder, and on Monday consecrated superintendent. At his request Philip William Otterbein, of the German church, assisted in the ordination.

The discourse preached by Coke on the occasion of the ordination of Asbury kindled the most lively emotions among the Methodists present, and deeply impressed the multitude. Several deacons were ordained on Friday, and on Sunday, the 2d of January, twelve or thirteen elders.

The first Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church was adopted by this conference. "This was substantially the same with the Large Minutes, the principal alterations

<sup>1</sup> Italics Whatcoat's. Phœbus's "Memoirs of Whatcoat," p. 21.

being only such as were necessary to adapt it to the state of things in America." <sup>1</sup>

The second and other important questions are here printed in full:

"*Ques.* 2. What can be done in order to the future union of the Methodists?"

"*Ans.* During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready in matters belonging to church government to obey his commands. And we do engage, after his death, to do everything that we judge consistent with the cause of religion in America and the political interests of these States to preserve and promote our union with the Methodists in Europe.

"*Ques.* 3. As the ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs of these United States have passed through a very considerable change by the Revolution, what plan of church government shall we hereafter pursue?"

"*Ans.* We will form ourselves into an Episcopal Church, under the direction of superintendents, elders, deacons, and helpers, according to the forms of ordination annexed to our liturgy, and the Form of Discipline set forth in these minutes."

"*Ques.* 23. May our ministers or traveling preachers drink spirituous liquors?"

"*Ans.* By no means, unless it be medicinally."

"*Ques.* 26. What is the office of a superintendent?"

"*Ans.* To ordain superintendents, elders, and deacons; to preside as a moderator in our conferences; to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits, and, in the intervals of the conference, to change, receive, or suspend preachers, as necessity may require; and to receive appeals from the preachers and people, and decide them.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Emory's "History of the Discipline," p. 25.

“ *Ques.* 27. To whom is the superintendent amenable for his conduct?

“ *Ans.* To the conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct if they see it necessary.

“ *Ques.* 28. If the superintendent ceases from traveling at large among the people, shall he still exercise his office in any degree?

“ *Ans.* If he ceases from traveling without the consent of the conference he shall not thereafter exercise any ministerial function whatsoever in our church.

“ *Ques.* 29. If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no superintendent remaining in our church, what shall we do?

“ *Ans.* The conference shall elect a superintendent, and the elders, or any three of them, shall ordain him according to our liturgy.

“ *Ques.* 30. What is the office of an elder?

“ *Ans.* To administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to perform all the other rites prescribed by our liturgy.

“ *Ques.* 31. What is the office of a deacon?

“ *Ans.* To baptize in the absence of an elder, to assist the elder in the administration of the Lord's Supper, to marry, bury the dead, and read the Liturgy to the people as prescribed, except what relates to the administration of the Lord's Supper.”

“ N.B. to *Ques.* 33. No helper, or even deacon, shall, on any pretense, at any time whatsoever, administer the Lord's Supper.”

“ *Ques.* 35. How are we to proceed with those elders or deacons who cease from traveling?

“ *Ans.* Unless they have the permission of the conference, declared under the hand of a superintendent, they are on no account to exercise any of the peculiar functions

of those offices among us. And if they do they are to be expelled immediately.

“*Ques.* 36. What method shall we take to prevent improper persons from preaching among us as traveling preachers?”

“*Ans.* Let no person be employed as a traveling preacher unless his name be printed in the minutes of the conference preceding, or a certificate be given him under the hand of one or other of the superintendents, or, in their absence, of three assistants, as is hereafter provided. And for this purpose let the minutes of the conference be always printed.”

The answer to question 42 comprised an elaborate plan to “extirpate the abomination of slavery.” It required each member, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistants (which notice the assistants were required to give immediately), to execute legally and record an instrument “setting free every slave between the ages of forty and forty-five immediately, or at the furthest when they reach the age of forty-five; every slave between twenty-five and forty immediately, or at the furthest at the expiration of five years; and every one between the ages of twenty and twenty-five immediately, or at the furthest when they arrive at the age of thirty; and every slave under the age of twenty as soon as they arrive at the age of twenty-five”: and it also ordered that every infant, born after the afore-mentioned rules are complied with, should immediately be emancipated.

Assistants were required to keep a journal containing names and ages of all slaves, and the dates of instruments of manumission, with the name of the court book and folio in which these were recorded, “which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding assistants.”

This plan further provided that, as these rules formed a new term of communion, all who would not conform should have liberty quietly to withdraw within twelve months after the notice; but if they neither complied nor withdrew they were to be excluded; and any member who withdrew voluntarily or was excluded should never partake of the Supper of the Lord until he obeyed. Nor should any slave-holder be admitted into the Society or to the Lord's Supper until he had complied with these rules.

Two remarkable postscripts, however, were added:

"N.B. These rules are to affect the members of our Society no further than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside.

"And, respecting our brethren in Virginia that are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given, to consider the expedience of compliance or non-compliance with these rules."

"*Ques.* 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?

"*Ans.* They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them."

"*Ques.* 45. Is there any direction to be given concerning the administration of baptism?

"*Ans.* Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have their choice either of immersion or sprinkling, and let the elder or deacon conduct himself accordingly."

"*Ques.* 65. What shall we do with those members of our Society who willfully and repeatedly neglect to meet their class?

"*Ans.* (1) Let the assistant or one of his helpers visit them, wherever it is practicable, and explain to them the consequence if they continue to neglect, namely, exclusion.

(2) If they do not amend let the assistant exclude them in the Society, informing it that they are laid aside for a breach of our rules of Discipline, and not for immoral conduct."

These were the principal provisions added to the minutes to adapt them to the enlarged work of a church as distinguished from a society, and to the situation in the United States.

It should be observed that the new church was established on a liturgical basis. "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America," sent over by Wesley, was adopted by the conference which formed the church, and ordered to be read. It included a form of public prayer, the form and manner of making and ordaining superintendents and elders and deacons, and the twenty-four Articles of Religion. In pursuance of this order, the liturgy was used in the principal churches in city and country, and gowns and bands were used by superintendents and elders.

Methodists who had been reared in the Church of England were inclined to the use of the Prayer-book, but a large majority of the members, consisting of those who had had no education in liturgical forms, exhibited dislike for them. "For some time," says Lee, "the preachers generally read prayers on the Lord's day, and in some cases the preachers read part of the morning service on Wednesdays and Fridays; but some who had been long accustomed to pray extempore were unwilling to adopt this new plan, being fully satisfied that they could pray better and with more devotion while their eyes were shut than they could with their eyes open. After a few years the Prayer-book was laid aside, and has never been used since in public worship."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," p. 107.



Extra services on the Sabbath, especially love-feasts, frequently consumed time needed for the liturgy, so that it gradually fell into disuse. Wesley's Sunday service, though mentioned occasionally in successive Disciplines until 1792, is not officially referred to after that date.<sup>1</sup>

He reduced the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England to twenty-four, and this concerning the rulers of the United States of America was added by the Christmas conference: "The President, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of State, *as the Delegates of the People*, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the Constitutions of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent Nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction."

Wesley omitted the 3d, 8th, 13th, 15th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 23d, 26th, 29th, 33d, 34th, and 37th articles of the Church of England. Some of the others were merely changed in phraseology or in unimportant points, but others to such an extent as to convey a meaning radically different; for instance, in the 12th article justification is substituted for baptism. Bishop Harris observes: "By these omissions and changes all traces of Calvinism, Romanism, and ritualism were eliminated. The Articles of Religion are therefore specially and strictly Arminian in all points which distinguish evangelical Arminianism from Calvinism."<sup>2</sup> It has often been remarked that they contain no statement of the doctrines which Wesley emphasized, notably that of the witness of the Spirit and that of Christian perfection. The American Methodists, however, from the beginning, expressly adopted the "Minutes" and

<sup>1</sup> Emory's "History of the Discipline," p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> "People's Cyclopaedia," "Methodism" (Hunt & Eaton).

Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament" as standards, and repeatedly acknowledged them during the lifetime of Wesley and on all suitable occasions since his death.

Freeborn Garrettson and James O. Cromwell were ordained as missionaries to Nova Scotia, and Jeremiah Lambert was ordained for Antigua, in the West Indies.

The organization of the church met with universal approval among Methodists, and was regarded favorably by the general public, although some communicants of the English church withdrew their sympathy and attendance, and "Jarratt could not sacrifice his churchly prejudices for the new and providential order of things."

During the conference Coke preached every day at noon, and some of the other preachers morning and evening.

## CHAPTER X.

### FROM THE ORDINATION OF ASBURY TO THE DEATH OF WESLEY.

THE first Sunday after the adjournment of the conference Asbury read prayers, preached, baptized children, and ordained Henry Willis deacon, and two days later elder. Asbury writes: "Nothing could have better pleased our old church folks than the late step we have taken in administering the ordinances. To the catholic Presbyterians it also gives satisfaction, but the Baptists are discontented." This entry relates to members of those bodies who had affiliated with the Methodists. So long as the Methodists did not administer the ordinances, neither the mode nor the subjects of baptism was a living question.

Asbury pursued his journey to Charleston, S. C., where on Sunday, the 27th of February, 1785, he heard Jesse Lee preach the first Methodist sermon delivered in that place with the view of establishing regular preaching. So hopeful was the aspect of affairs that Willis was stationed there, and soon formed a society.

Coke traveled incessantly. At Abingdon he gave orders that the materials for the erection of the college which the late Conference had decided to establish at that place be procured at once. He spent ten days in Philadelphia, and in New York three weeks, preaching, superintending the

publication of his sermons, and collecting money for the new missions in Nova Scotia. Later he traversed Delaware. In Baltimore he induced the people to subscribe five hundred pounds sterling to build a new church. Having a considerable private fortune, he was able to relieve the needy and to assist enterprises which he established or desired to promote. His liberality, however, surpassed his available means, and his "Journal" states that when he arrived at Portsmouth, Va., on the 15th of March, he had less than a dollar.

At Kingston, N. C., Asbury was entertained by the governor of the State; here he met Coke and held a conference. The Rev. Devereux Jarratt owned twenty-four negroes, and was much exercised by the rule against slavery. In fact, all through Virginia disputes arose over this rule. Coke and a certain colonel had a discussion upon the topic, and the latter uttered threats against the preachers. James O'Kelly on the next day delivered a powerful speech, which made the people very angry.

Coke's account of this incident is graphic. While he was preaching against slave-holding several retired to combine to flog him. Asbury congratulates himself that "they came off with whole bones."

In another place a mob came with staves and clubs to meet him. Many of the members of the Society, however, emancipated their slaves; one fifteen, and another twenty-one. Coke remarks: "These are great sacrifices, for the slaves are worth, I suppose, upon an average, thirty or forty pounds sterling each, perhaps more." When he reached North Carolina he said, "I am now done with my testimony for a time, the laws of this State forbidding any to emancipate the negroes."

To each preacher was given a petition, for his own and other signatures, entreating the General Assembly of Vir-

ginia to pass a law for the immediate or gradual emancipation of the slaves. Coke and Asbury, by appointment, waited on General Washington at Mount Vernon. Coke thus describes the visit: "He received us very politely, and was very open to access. He is quite the plain country gentleman. After dinner we desired a private interview, and opened to him the grand business on which we came, presenting to him our petition for the emancipation of the negroes, and entreating his signature, if the eminence of his station did not render it inexpedient for him to sign any petition. He informed us that he was of our sentiments, and had signified his thoughts on the subject to most of the great men of the State; that he did not think it proper to sign the petition, but if the Assembly took it into consideration would signify his sentiments to the Assembly by a letter. He asked us to spend the evening and lodge at his house, but our engagements at Annapolis the following day would not admit of it."<sup>1</sup>

The conference assembled in Baltimore on June 1st. Coke preached at noon on "Ministerial Faithfulness," and, as he was to sail for Europe the next day, they sat till midnight. Early the next morning he delivered a farewell discourse on "St. Paul's Awful Exhortation to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus."

Asbury, the next Sunday after adjournment of the conference, preached a sermon at Abingdon on the occasion of the laying of the corner-stone of Cokesbury College, after which he resumed his journeys, but was for several months extremely ill. In part because of his health, and in large part because they thought the dignity of a bishop required it, his friends induced him to purchase a carriage; but he thought it ostentatious, and bought a "second-hand sulky," leaving the carriage to be sold.

<sup>1</sup> "Coke's Journal," p. 45.

In England Coke met with an unpleasant reception from Wesley. Charles Wesley had charged him with speaking evil of the constitution of his country, and with misrepresenting the sentiments of John and Charles Wesley, and he acknowledged that in one of his sermons in Baltimore he had used imprudently severe language. John Wesley was entirely satisfied, and said to his brother, "I believe Dr. Coke is as free from ambition as from covetousness, and has *done* nothing wrongly that I know, but he has *spoken* wrongly, which he retracted the moment I spoke to him about it. If you cannot or will not help me yourself, do not hinder those who can and will."

Coke sailed for Nova Scotia on the 24th of September, 1786, accompanied by three preachers whom Wesley had commissioned to reinforce Garrettson and his colleagues. The voyage was of unparalleled severity; they were blown hundreds of miles out of their course, and landed on the island of Antigua, in the West Indies, remaining there until February 10, 1787. On that date Coke sailed for Charleston, S. C., where he met Asbury, and dedicated the new Methodist chapel, which accommodated fifteen hundred. In this they held the first conference ever convened in South Carolina. The church had but forty white members, yet they had built an edifice worth a thousand pounds sterling. The conference ended, Asbury and Coke rode on horseback at the rate of three hundred miles a week, preaching every day. In regions where Coke had been persecuted for his antislavery sentiments he was received in peace, some of his most violent opponents having become members of the Society.

The conferences held in 1786 showed nearly 20,000 members and 117 ministers. There were about 60 chapels, but the congregations were often far beyond their capacity. Huge barns were thrown open for the preachers, but even

those would not accommodate the multitudes. It has been estimated that there were then more than 200,000 habitual attendants upon Methodist worship.

In Mecklenburg County, Virginia, Coke preached to about four thousand, which he describes as the largest congregation he had seen in America, "though there was no town within a great many miles."

A conference had been appointed for Abingdon, Md., July 24th. But to accommodate Coke its place and date had been changed, and on the 1st of May it assembled at Baltimore, where took place an extraordinary discussion, indicating the independence of the early ministers of the church, and their opposition to the exercise of doubtful or illegal episcopal power. Coke was complained of by the preachers "because he had taken upon himself a right which they never gave him, of altering the time and place of holding our conference, after it had been settled and fixed on at the previous conference."<sup>1</sup> Another complaint was also brought against him for writing to some of the preachers improper letters, calculated to stir up strife and contention. Lee states that the preachers were pretty generally united against him, that he acknowledged his faults, begged pardon, and promised not to meddle with their affairs when he was out of the United States.

Coke's version of the settlement is: "We mutually yielded and mutually submitted, and the silken cords of love and affection were tied to the horns of the altar for ever and ever." Asbury disposed of it in a single sentence: "We had some warm and close debates in conference, but all ended in love and peace."

The following certificate, witnessed by three of the preachers, reveals the gravity of the issue:

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," p. 125.

“ I do solemnly engage by this instrument that I never will, by virtue of my office as superintendent of the Methodist Church, exercise any government whatever in said Methodist Church during my absence from the United States. And I do also engage, that I will exercise no privilege in the said church when present in the United States, except that of ordaining according to the regulations and law already existing or hereafter to be made in the said church, and that of presiding when present in conference, and, lastly, that of traveling at large. Given under my hand, the second day of May, in the year 1787.

“ THOMAS COKE.”

On this basis the conference agreed to overlook everything that had been done contrary to its judgment, provided the condition should be expressed in the minutes, which was done in these words:

“ *Ques.* Who are the superintendents of our church for the United States?

“ *Ans.* Thomas Coke (*when present in the States*) and Francis Asbury.”

Asbury preached, organized, and administered the sacraments through Long Island, returning later to New York; and after traveling thousands of miles through the Middle and Southern States, the closing days of 1787 found him at Lancaster, Va.

The complete report of the state of the denomination at the close of the year showed 133 ministers and 21,949 white and 3893 colored members; 35 preachers had been admitted on trial. Six conferences were appointed for the coming year.

The relations of the American Methodists to Wesley were adjusted in a way which at first was offensive to the founder of Methodism. At the Baltimore Conference it



was proposed that Garrettson be elected and ordained as "superintendent over the societies in Nova Scotia and the West Indies." This proposition was made in compliance with the express wishes of Wesley and Coke, and was desired by most of the preachers in Nova Scotia; but the arrangement was not made. Bangs, who obtained his information direct from Garrettson,<sup>1</sup> represents that Garrettson objected to be ordained until he should have visited the brethren in Nova Scotia for one year, that Coke was satisfied with this, and there the business ended; but, for some unexplained reason, Garrettson was appointed presiding elder on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Wesley had also proposed that Whatcoat should be appointed joint superintendent with Asbury, but most of the preachers declined to consent to it, on two grounds: "First, that Richard Whatcoat was not qualified to take charge of the connection; second, that they were apprehensive that if Whatcoat were ordained Wesley would likely recall Asbury, and he would return to England."<sup>2</sup> Coke, however, contended that when the church was formed, in 1784, the conference had voted that "during the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready in matters belonging to church government to obey his commands." To this many of the members of the conference replied that they were not at the conference when that engagement was entered into, and did not consider themselves bound by it. Others affirmed that, though they were ready at that time, they did not now feel so; that "they had made the engagement of their own accord, and among themselves, and they believed they had a right to depart therefrom when they pleased, seeing it was not a contract made with Mr. Wesley, or any

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Lee, p. 126.

other person, but an agreement among themselves. It was further argued that Wesley, while in England, could not tell whether a man was qualified to govern us as well as we, who were present and were to be governed. We believed, also, that if Mr. Wesley was here he would be of the same opinion with us." They then agreed to leave that statement out of the minutes, which was done.

Without doubt the conference was right in concluding that it had never engaged to submit its church officers to Wesley's judgment. These words are in the form for the "ordination of superintendents," prepared by Wesley, and recommended in the Prayer-book of 1784: "After the gospel and the sermon are ended the elected person shall be presented by two elders under the superintendent, saying," etc. "This," says Bishop Emory,<sup>1</sup> "indisputably proves that Wesley himself contemplated the election of our superintendents, and not that they were to be appointed by him." Asbury had refused to act in that capacity unless the preachers unanimously chose him. The letter of Wesley to Coke, produced by the latter for his justification, bears date of London, September 6, 1786:

"DEAR SIR: I desire that you would appoint a General Conference of all our preachers in the United States, to meet at Baltimore on May 1, 1787; and that Mr. Richard Whatcoat may be appointed superintendent with Mr. Francis Asbury."

Since Coke contended that this was an appointment, if the conference had yielded they might have been equally required by the same authority to submit to the recall of Asbury. As this did not spring from any disaffection toward Wesley, the conference wrote a long, loving letter,

<sup>1</sup> "Defense of our Fathers," p. 123.

requesting him to come to America and visit his spiritual children.

After traveling northwest from Georgia, over the mountains and through the primeval forest, a part of the way determining his course by compass, Asbury descended into the valley of the Mississippi, preaching and meeting the ministers as he went. He reached Uniontown, Pa., on the 22d of July, and here held a conference, where the first Methodist ordination beyond the Alleghanies is supposed to have been performed. Asbury and Whatcoat, the one a bishop, the other an elder, appeared in sacerdotal robes, and the morning service was read, as abridged by Wesley. The candidate was Michael Leard, famous for being able to repeat nearly the whole of the Old Testament and large portions of the New.

Forty-eight preachers were admitted on trial in 1788, among them William McKendree and Valentine Cook. This year the church mourned the loss by death of four ministers.

The word "superintendent" was omitted from the first question, which in the minutes for 1788 reads: "*Ques.* Who are the *bishops* of our church for the United States?" Wesley misunderstood the spirit of the change, but when it was fully explained as signifying only what he meant by the word "superintendent," and that it was adopted to agree with the term "Episcopal" in the title of the church, he defended the action against the severe criticisms of his brother Charles and others, and in every possible way expressed his regard for his American brethren.

The first conference ever held in the city of New York assembled Tuesday, September 30, 1788, and continued until the following Saturday.

Garrettson was appointed presiding elder of the districts north of the city of New York, including all the circuits from

New Rochelle to Lake Champlain. No material alterations were made in the Discipline in this year.

Asbury was in Virginia and North Carolina in January, 1789, passing into South Carolina on the 3d of February. On the 20th of that month he prepared his plan for the coming conference, and a special entry is significant: "I made out a registry of all the preachers on the continent who bear the name of Methodists." The conference over, Asbury left Charleston, and on the night of the 26th was joined by Coke, who had landed at Charleston about three hours after the former's departure. During Coke's absence from the United States he had been constantly engaged in England and the West Indies, and had sailed from Jamaica to Charleston. *En route* to Georgia they found congregations everywhere; and in that State 2011 Methodists, the increase the preceding year being 784.

The conference agreed to erect a college in Georgia, and the leading members, spoken of by Coke as "our principal friends," engaged to purchase at least two thousand acres of good land for its support; in one congregation 12,500 pounds of tobacco were subscribed for the purpose; this, it was estimated, would produce, clear of expenses, about one hundred pounds sterling. He also states that the conference most humbly entreated Wesley to permit them to name it Wesley College, as a memorial of his affection for Georgia and of its great respect for him. They then returned to Charleston.

By the 20th of April they were holding the North Carolina Conference, at which nineteen preachers assembled, some of whom, to attend it, had crossed the Alleghany Mountains. The increase in that State had been 741, and the whole number of members was 6779. This conference included some of the appointments in the State of Kentucky, from which had been received a letter asking that a college

might be erected, and offering to give or purchase three or four thousand acres of good land to support it. The conference sent word: "If they will provide five thousand acres of fertile ground, and settle it on such trustees as we shall mention, under the direction of the conference, we will undertake to build a college for that part of our connection within ten years."

Crossing into Virginia, they held the conference in Petersburg. Coke was astonished at the treatment he received in Halifax County; there they had persecuted him, and now "almost all the great people of the county came in their chariots and other carriages to hear me, and behaved with great propriety. There were not less than five colonels in the congregation."

Coke saw an illustration in Annapolis, Md., of the kind of religious excitement which so disturbed the spirit of Thomas Rankin. He was not unfavorably affected, for, referring to the current charges of fanaticism, he observes: "Whether there be 'wild-fire' in it or not, I do most ardently wish that there were such a work at this time in England." At the conference in Baltimore he preached to two thousand who remained till two o'clock in the morning in prayer and in praising God for the conversion of sinners. From that city they went to Cokesbury, and found that "God was working among the students." Asbury says: "One, however, we expelled."

At the first conference in New Jersey, though great efforts had been made to awaken the people, there had been a decrease of 795. Coke remarks that this sometimes happens where the ministers have been most faithful.

The second conference was held in New York on the 28th of June. At the first a comprehensive plan had been formed for "the extension of the work of God along the Hudson River." Garrettson was commissioned to execute

it, with the aid of the preachers who had offered themselves for trial. There were then no Methodist societies farther north than Westchester. He requested the young men to meet him when the conference adjourned, and directed them where to begin, and how to form their circuits; informing them that he should proceed up the North River to the extreme parts of the work, visiting towns and cities on the way, and on his return should hold their Quarterly Meetings. Immediately afterward he began a tour through the northern part of the State of New York and Vermont. At every point he met difficulties. The scattered congregations of Lutherans and Dutch Reformed on the sides of the Hudson were feeble. In Vermont and western Massachusetts, though the country was regularly divided into parishes, each of which had generally a settled pastor, the doctrines taught were Calvinistic, and experimental religion was at a low ebb. The laity were as forward as the ministry to attack the Arminians, and as soon as a Methodist preacher finished his discourse he had to encounter "a spirit of opposition as irksome to an ingenuous mind as it is unprofitable to a hardened heart."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless Garrettson visited New Rochelle, North Castle, Bedford, Peekskill, and Rhinebeck, preaching everywhere. Such was his personal dignity that he commanded respect, and such his zeal that he passed through this vast district every three months, traveling about a thousand miles, and preaching upward of one hundred sermons. The reports of his success at this conference were highly encouraging.

For several years Jesse Lee had entertained the design of introducing Methodism into New England, as at Cheraw, in the South, he had met a traveling merchant from the Eastern States, whose accounts caused him to think it his duty to pioneer the denomination into that part of the

<sup>1</sup> Bangs's "Life of Garrettson," p. 173.

country. Asbury considered the scheme premature, if not extravagant, but Lee always adhered to it.

Charles Wesley had preached in Boston on his way from Georgia to England in 1736, but Methodism, in the signification of the word as used in this work, had not then arisen. Boardman had also preached in New England in 1772, and some of Garrettson's preachers on the Hudson had crossed the boundary line before Lee. William Black, of Nova Scotia, in his travels to and fro had preached occasional sermons in New England, and about two years before Lee was appointed to Connecticut, Cornelius Cook had preached in Norwalk, but without permanent results. Garrettson, on his return from Nova Scotia, passing through Boston in 1787, found three persons who had been members of Boardman's society, which, however, in the absence of pastoral supervision, had disintegrated. Garrettson preached several sermons in private houses.

Lee began a circuit at Norwalk, Conn., on the 17th of June, 1789. No house could be procured. Every person was afraid that he might complicate himself if he gave any aid to the movement. Mr. Lee says: "I then went into the street, and began to sing, and then prayed, and preached to a decent congregation." Four days later he preached in the city of New Haven to as many as could crowd into the court-house. Being denied a private house to preach in, he asked for the use of an old deserted building, but was refused. He then proposed to preach in a neighboring orchard, but was repulsed, and finally stood under an apple-tree on the highway. He notified the people that he would return in two weeks, and if any would open their houses he would be glad, but if none were willing the meeting would be at the same place.

At Fairfield the schoolmaster and four women came to hear Lee, but as he sang the number increased to forty. In

New Haven the president of Yale College and many of the students attended. At Danbury, one day, he preached twice at the court-house. In New Haven on his second visit the state-house bell was rung, and the people assembled; but influential men procured him the opportunity of preaching in the Congregational chapel. Among his hearers was the pastor of that church, and Dr. Edwards, son of the great Jonathan, the former president of Princeton College. When he had finished, though several told him they were much pleased with the discourse, no man invited him home. Lee says: "I went back to the tavern, retired into a room, went to prayer, and felt the Lord precious to my soul. I believed the Lord had sent me there. If so, I was sure to find favor in the eyes of some of the people. In a little time David Becher came, asked me to go home with him, and said he would be willing to entertain me when I came to town again. I went with him, and his wife was very kind." David "Becher" was an honest blacksmith, the father of Lyman Beecher. Had Lyman Beecher's mother not been removed by death shortly after his birth, on account of which he was adopted and brought up elsewhere, by his uncle, Lot Benton, it is not a violent stretch of imagination to fancy that the boy, then not quite sixteen years of age, might have fallen under the strangely magnetic influence of Lee, whom youths generally found irresistible.

After forming an extensive circuit in Connecticut, Lee entered Rhode Island, preaching and making appointments as he went.

The minutes of 1789 introduce a new question:

"*Ques.* Who are the persons that exercise episcopal office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?"

"*Ans.* John Wesley, Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury."



The second also differs from any preceding question, though containing no new fact.

"*Ques.* Who have been elected by the unanimous suffrages of the General Conference to superintend the Methodist connection in America?"

"*Ans.* Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury."

This conference adopted a scheme, presented by the bishops, of an institution to be known as the "Council." The ground of the action was the necessity of some method of general legislation, and the supposed impossibility of holding a General Conference. The purpose was strenuously opposed, and there was much debate; but it finally prevailed by a large majority. The Council was to be composed of the bishops and presiding elders. Nine should be required for a quorum, and should there be less than that number present the bishops were to fill vacancies by summoning such elders as they thought best. The Council should have authority to mature everything considered expedient "to preserve the general union, to make and keep an external form of worship similar in all societies, to preserve the essentials of Methodist doctrine and discipline pure and uncorrupted, to correct all abuses and disorders," and everything "necessary for the good of the church, and for promoting and improving the colleges and plan of general education." Nothing should be considered as a resolution of the Council unless assented to unanimously, and nothing so assented to should be binding in any district until it was agreed upon by a majority of the conference held for that district. The first Council was to be held at Cokesbury on the first day of December, and subsequently the bishops were to have authority to summon the Council to meet at such times and places as they judged expedient.

Those in attendance at the first session were Asbury and eleven conspicuous elders, the most influential being O'Kelly, Dickins, and Garrettson.

After transacting much business, they resolved that "every resolution of the first Council shall be put to vote in each conference, and shall not be adopted unless it obtains a majority of the different conferences. But every resolution received by a majority of the several conferences shall be received by every member of each conference." The last resolution ordered that another Council should be convened at Baltimore on the first day of December, 1790.

In the conference that sat in New York in the year 1789, Asbury presented the following proposition: "Whether it would not be proper for us, as a church, to present a congratulatory address to General Washington, who has lately been inaugurated President of the United States, in which should be embodied our approbation of the Constitution, and professing our allegiance to the government." The conference approved and warmly recommended the measure, and appointed Coke and Asbury to draw up the paper. After consideration it was concluded that, though Coke was senior bishop, yet, not being an American citizen, it would not be proper for him to present the address. John Dickins and Thomas Morrell were delegated to wait on President Washington with a copy, and to request him to appoint a time to receive the bishops, one of whom was to read it to him and receive his answer. They did so, and as Morrell was personally acquainted with him, he was asked to submit a copy, and request Washington's reception of the original by the hands of the bishops. The President appointed the fourth succeeding day at twelve o'clock, and at the hour Bishops Coke and Asbury were present, accompanied by Dickins and Morrell. The latter, in a letter to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper from his residence, August 26,

1827, says that Asbury read the address in an impressive manner, the President read his reply with fluency and animation, they exchanged their respective documents, and after sitting a few minutes the visitors retired.

The following is the address of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church :

*“To the President of the United States.*

“SIR: We, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, humbly beg leave, in the name of our Society collectively in these United States, to express to you the warm feeling of our hearts, and our sincere congratulations on your appointment to the Presidentship of these States. We are conscious, from the signal proofs you have already given, that you are a friend of mankind; and, under this established idea, place as full confidence in your wisdom and integrity for the preservation of those civil and religious liberties which have been transmitted to us by the providence of God and the glorious Revolution, as we believe ought to be reposed in man.

“We have received the most grateful satisfaction from the humble and entire dependence on the great Governor of the universe which you have repeatedly expressed, acknowledging him the source of every blessing, and particularly of the most excellent Constitution of these States, which is at present the admiration of the world, and may in future become its great exemplar for imitation; and hence we enjoy a holy expectation that you will always prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion, the grand end of our creation and present probationary existence. And we promise you our fervent prayers to the throne of grace, that God Almighty may endue you with all the graces and gifts of his Holy Spirit, that he may enable you to fill up your important station to his glory,

the good of his church, the happiness and prosperity of the United States, and the welfare of mankind.

“Signed, in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church,  
“THOMAS COKE,  
“FRANCIS ASBURY.  
“NEW YORK, May 29, 1789.”

The reply of President Washington was as follows:

*“To the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.*

“GENTLEMEN: I return to you individually, and through you to your Society collectively in the United States, my thanks for the demonstration of affection, and the expressions of joy offered, in their behalf, on my late appointment. It shall be my endeavor to manifest the purity of my inclinations for promoting the happiness of mankind, as well as the sincerity of my desires to contribute whatever may be in my power toward the civil and religious liberties of the American people. In pursuing this line of conduct, I hope, by the assistance of divine Providence, not altogether to disappoint the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me.

“It always affords me satisfaction when I find a concurrence of sentiment and practice between all conscientious men, in acknowledgments of homage to the great Governor of the universe, and in professions of support to a just civil government. After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination who demean themselves as good citizens will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion, I must assure you in particular that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the throne of grace for me, and that I like-

wise implore the divine benediction on yourselves and your religious community.

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”<sup>1</sup>

A few days after the address and the response were inserted in the public papers, some of the ministers and members of other churches appeared dissatisfied that the Methodists should take the lead, and the other denominations successively followed the example. The papers took up the question of Coke's signing the address as bishop, and High-churchmen printed such inquiries as “Who is he?” “How came he to be a bishop?” “Who consecrated him?” Severe strictures were made on the impropriety of a British subject's signing a paper approving the government of the United States. They charged him with duplicity, and with being an enemy to the independence of America, and alleged that he had written an inflammatory epistle to the people of Great Britain, condemning the efforts of the Americans to obtain independence.

The minutes of 1790 show that 67 were ordained elders and 57 deacons, besides which 47 preachers were received on trial, and 57,631 lay members added, of whom about one fourth were classified as colored; and the whole number of preachers was 227. Fourteen conferences were held in Charleston, S. C., Georgia, Kentucky, Holston, Tenn., North Carolina, others in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the last for the year in the city of New York on the 4th of October. Twenty new circuits and stations were formed, and among them were three in the South, six in the West, three in Connecticut—New Haven, Hartford, and Litchfield—and one in Massachusetts, at Boston.

The first sermon preached by the Methodists in the city

<sup>1</sup> Bangs's “History of Methodism,” vol. i., p. 284.

of Middletown was on the seventh day of December, 1789, and the first in Wilbraham, Mass., May 3d of the same year. The introduction of Methodism into Boston and vicinity is described by Jesse Lee, who has the undisputed honor of its permanent establishment. He observes: "In the course of the preceding summer Mr. Freeborn Garrettson had visited that town [Boston] and preached. I made them a visit in July. On one occasion I went out on the Common, and, standing on a table, began to sing with only a few persons present. But, having prayed and begun to preach, the number increased so that there were two or three thousand attentive hearers. The number was still more greatly increased the next Sabbath day at the same place at six o'clock in the afternoon."

Lee furnishes interesting details of the opening of the work. The first Methodist sermon in Salem was preached July 12, 1790, in Newburyport three days later, in Danvers on the 4th, Marblehead on the 17th, the 20th in Charlestown. On the 14th of December the first sermon in Lynn was preached. Notwithstanding the multitude to whom Lee preached on the Common in Boston, he found it hard to procure a place for service, and "the Word took but little hold on the minds of the hearers," whereas in Lynn as soon as he began he produced a powerful effect on the hearers, who flocked to hear by hundreds. Therefore it soon appeared that Lynn was the place that should be attended to in preference to any other.

Some time after Lee had begun his work in New England, Garrettson, accompanied by the famous Black Harry, entered Connecticut at Sharon, and preached under the trees to a thousand people. At Litchfield he was permitted to preach in the Episcopal church and in the Presbyterian meeting-house. But after two or three days he reached the interior of New England, and found himself surrounded

by the flames of doctrinal discussion, which Lee and his colleagues had aroused. At Worcester he went from one end of the town to the other, and could get no one to open the court-house and gather the inhabitants. The next day he rode forty-eight miles to Boston. His "Journal" contains a passage showing the state of things in that city with regard to negroes: "I boarded Harry with the master mason for the Africans, and I took my own lodgings with a gentleman who had been a Methodist in England, but had, I fear, fallen from the spirit of Methodism." Before leaving that part of the country he preached in Providence, where he was well received by the churches, by Christians in particular, and by a venerable pastor named Snow. But in Hartford he was mobbed. In his first sermon he encountered "as ill-behaved an audience as I have ever seen in New England, and the next night some of what are called 'the gentry' behaved so ill that I was under the necessity of breaking up the meeting, declining to preach by candle-light"; but he preached the next day in the state-house.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Ware, who had been traveling in Tennessee, was taken by Bishop Asbury to North Carolina in the spring of 1789. Everywhere Ware, by his wisdom, eloquence, and piety, commanded respect and won adherents to his cause and friends to himself.

The conversion of General Bryan, a lawyer of distinction, and a professed deist, produced in a day an effect which could hardly have been compassed in a year of ordinary religious work. At the Quarterly Meeting in 1790, to which he had been drawn by the persuasions of his wife, the preaching, with occasional intervals, continued for several hours. "The whole assembly were from time to time bowed down like the slender reed before the passing breeze; but none of them had as yet lost their elasticity. Many

<sup>1</sup> "Garrettson's Journal."

hearts seemed bruised, but none broken. The last that spoke melted his auditors on these affecting words: 'Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.'” Under this discourse General Bryan wept, and many wondered to see him volunteer in taking the collection, at the close of which, after asking the privilege of addressing the people, he spoke in the following strain:

“FELLOW-CITIZENS: I have sometimes trembled before the majesty of courts. But where am I now? and what? An advocate? Yes! Before a judge weak and erring like myself? No, but before the Judge eternal! To plead the cause of truth against myself, and against many of you, who, like myself, have crucified the Lord of glory! Had I known it, I would not have done so wickedly, nor would you, nor you [pointing to two of his deistical fraternity]. You see my tears; they are tears of penitential grief for myself and for you; for we have denied the Lord that bought us with his own blood.

“Ye dear heralds of the gospel! I am an advocate for Christ. You have convinced me. You say, when the Eternal would save the world he chose a way known only to himself. None of the princes of this world knew it, and they could not until it was told them, and then they would not believe! So neither would I until you melted me into the belief. Some may doubt it, but I know God has sent you, and your God and people shall be mine.”

“During this speech,” adds Ware, “the people were silent as death, save now and then a sob or shriek; but now a loud cry arose, and continued with many until the going down of the sun; and the slain of the Lord were many.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Memoir of Thomas Ware,” pp. 166, 167.



A rule is found in the minutes of 1790, establishing Sunday-schools:

*Ques.* What can be done in order to instruct poor children (white and black) to read?

*Ans.* Let us labor, as the heart and soul of one man, to establish Sunday-schools in or near the place of public worship."

The rule provided that the teachers should be appointed by bishops, elders, deacons, or preachers, that they must teach gratuitously, and that the school should open at six in the morning, and continue till ten, and at two in the afternoon, and continue till six, "where it does not interfere with the public worship." The Council was also instructed to "compile a proper school-book to teach them learning and piety." As the schools were established in several places, and the greater part of the scholars were "black children whose parents were backward about sending them,"<sup>1</sup> the masters became discouraged, and, having no pay and little promise of doing good, the work in this form was soon suspended. So far as can be ascertained, the first of the kind in the New World was established by Francis Asbury, in 1786, at the house of Thomas Crenshaw, in Hanover County, Virginia, and the first recognition of Sunday-schools by an American church was given by this vote in the Conference of 1790.

The increase of members in 1790, though great, was partly owing to a difference in the time of taking the accounts. Says Lee: "Last year it was closed in May. This year in October, which extended the time to one year and five months. Had the numbers been taken in May, as they were the last year, the increase would not have been so large; but there was a most blessed work of God in different parts of the country."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

The name of John Dickins, who had been stationed at Philadelphia in 1789, his appellation being "book steward," a term in use among the Wesleyans in England, appears by itself in the minutes of 1790, under the designation of "superintendent of the printing and book business." In 1789 Philip Cox also was left without a circuit, as "book steward at large."

The second Council convened on December 1, 1790, and, after having considered thirty-one subjects, adjourned, to meet in two years.

Coke, after traveling through Great Britain and Ireland, and making a visit to the West Indies, accompanied by Hackett, one of his missionaries, had sailed from Jamaica to the United States, and arrived at Charleston, February 23, 1791. As he was known to be on the way, the conference then in session expected him; and as the members had remained one day longer than their business required, hoping for his arrival although the vessel was wrecked, they had the privilege of meeting, and Coke records his pleasure at spending the day with them "in many solemn and useful conversations."

Coke and Asbury took separate routes to the Georgia Conference, and after it adjourned proceeded to the North Carolina Conference, continuing together till they arrived at Port Royal, where, on the 29th of April, they received intelligence of the death of John Wesley, which had occurred March 2, 1791.

At one period it might have been important to present a catalogue of Wesley's literary works, to furnish evidence of his scholastic attainments, to defend him from the charges of enemies, to demonstrate the extent of his influence; but his fame may be trusted safely to Macaulay, Lecky, Green, and every modern church historian of rank, who have placed him upon a pedestal apart, agreeing with one

of the most recent of them, Dr. Philip Schaff, that he was "the most apostolic man since the apostolic age."

A remarkable testimonial to him, in view of the fact that Wesley's least partial biographer is Southey, is found in a letter written by the latter to Wilberforce, in which he says: "He was the most influential mind of the century—the man who will have produced the greatest effects centuries, or perhaps millenniums, hence, if the present race of men should continue so long."<sup>1</sup>

Wesley sympathized with every movement having in view the welfare of the human race. The last letter he ever wrote was addressed to Wilberforce, who had brought before the Parliament the question of the abolition of slavery. It bears date of London, February 24, 1791, and shows that age had not diminished the vigor of his style.

"MY DEAR SIR: Unless the Divine Power has raised you up to be as Athanasius, *contra mundum*, I see not how you can get through your glorious enterprise in opposing that execrable villainy which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils; but if God be for you, who can be against you?"

Wesley exerted a powerful influence over John Howard, the philanthropist, and says of him: "I had the pleasure of a conversation with Mr. Howard, I think one of the greatest men in Europe. Nothing but the mighty power of God can enable him to go through his difficult and dangerous employments."

Howard, writing to Alexander Knox, Esq., refers to Wesley in these words: "I was encouraged by him to go

<sup>1</sup> "Wilberforce Correspondence," vol. ii., p. 388.

on vigorously with my own designs. I saw in him how much a single man might achieve by zeal and perseverance, and I thought, Why may not I do as much in my way as Mr. Wesley has done in his, if I am only as assiduous and persevering? and I determined I would pursue my work with more alacrity than ever."

One quality of John Wesley was that of never forgetting a friend, and always manifesting his friendship when that friend was in need. In England was a barber named William Shent, who in old age fell into sin and embarrassment. His friends forsook him. Whereupon Wesley wrote to the Methodist Society a letter which illustrates his intensity, frankness, irresistible logic, eloquence, and pathos:

"LONDON, January 11, 1779.

"I have a few questions which I desire may be proposed to the Society at Keighley:

"Who was the occasion of the Methodist preacher's first setting foot in Leeds? William Shent.

"Who received John Nelson into his house at his first coming thither? William Shent.

"Who was it that invited me, and received me when I came? William Shent.

"Who was it that stood by me while I preached in the street, with stones flying on every side? William Shent.

"Who was it that bore the storm of persecution for the whole town, and stemmed it at the peril of his life? William Shent.

"Whose word did God bless for many years in an eminent manner? William Shent's.

"By whom were many children now in Paradise begotten in the Lord, and many now alive? William Shent.

"Who is he that is ready now to be broken up and turned into the street? William Shent.

“And does nobody care for this? William Shent fell into sin and was publicly expelled the Society; but must he be also starved? Must he, with his gray hairs and all his children, be without a place to lay his head? Can you suffer this? Oh, tell it not in Gath! Where is gratitude? Where is compassion? Where is Christianity? Where is humanity? Where is concern for the cause of God? Who is a wise man among you? Who is concerned for the gospel? Who has put on bowels of mercy? Let him arise and exert himself in this matter. You here all arise as one man and roll away the reproach. Let us set him on his feet once more. It may save both him and his family. But what we do, let it be done quickly.

“I am, dear brethren, your affectionate brother,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

Wesley's fame as a preacher was somewhat obscured by the extraordinary power of Whitefield, whose dramatic eloquence attracted all classes. Yet the severity and overwhelming religious power of Wesley were such that men who would not submit to the claims of God as expounded by him did not dare to hear him. He attracted even larger congregations than Whitefield, and produced a more powerful and permanent impression. Rigg, in “The Living Wesley,” compares the two justly: “Wesley was not a pictorial or dramatic preacher like his great preaching contemporary, Whitefield; but whereas Whitefield, powerful preacher as he was, was yet more popular than powerful, Wesley, popular preacher as he was, was yet more powerful, in comparison with his fellows, than he was popular.”

No preacher since the days when Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, equaled him, on extraordinary occasions, in moral power, of which many instances are given by Southey.

A striking description, because of the man who wrote it and the fact that he did so with no thought of publication, is in a letter written to Wesley by John Whitelamb, who was Samuel Wesley's amanuensis. He had been a fellow-student of Wesley's at Oxford, and interested in Methodism before it took on its permanent type. He had married Wesley's sister Mary, but she died in 1735. Afterward he became a rector in the Church of England, and did not sympathize with Methodism; but hearing Wesley preach at Epworth, standing on his father's tombstone, subsequently wrote him the following letter:

“DEAR BROTHER: I saw you at Epworth on Tuesday evening. Fain would I have spoken to you, but that I am quite at a loss how to address you or behave. Your way of thinking is so extraordinary that your presence creates an awe, as though you were an inhabitant of another world. God grant that you and your followers may have entire liberty of conscience; will you not allow others the same? I cannot think as you do; but I retain the highest veneration and affection for you. The sight of you moves me strangely. My heart overflows with gratitude. I cannot refrain from tears when I think, This is the man who at Oxford was more than a father to me! This is he whom I have there heard expound or dispute publicly, and preach at St. Mary's with such applause!”<sup>1</sup>

Later their former intimacy was in some degree renewed, for in 1742 Wesley preached in Mr. Whitelamb's church morning and afternoon at the latter's request; and at six in the evening, having already delivered three sermons, he preached in Epworth churchyard for nearly three

<sup>1</sup> “Methodist Magazine,” 1778, edited by John Wesley (London).

hours, the people constraining him to remain and lead them to Christ.

The same awe-inspiring influence and overwhelming personal force characterized him sometimes even in dealing with his brother Charles, who on one occasion attempted to dissuade him from doing what he thought (perhaps mistakenly) his duty. In answer he exclaimed, "Brother, when I devoted to God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation? No."

So far as is known, the last letter from Wesley to the United States was written only twenty-nine days before his death, to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper :

“NEAR LONDON, February 1, 1791.

“MY DEAR BROTHER: Those that desire to write or say anything to me have no time to lose; for time has shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind. But I have reason to be thankful for the time that is past; I felt few of the infirmities of age for fourscore and six years. It was not till a year and a half ago that my strength and my sight failed. And still I am enabled to scrawl a little and to creep, though I cannot run. Probably I should not be able to do so much did not many of you assist me by your prayers. I have given a distinct account of the work of God which has been wrought in Britain and Ireland for more than half a century. We want some of you to give us a connected relation of what our Lord has been doing in America, from the time that Richard Boardman accepted the invitation and left his country to serve you. See that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue :

Though mountains rise, and oceans roll,  
To sever us in vain.

To the care of our common Lord I commit you ; and am  
“ Your affectionate friend and brother,  
“ JOHN WESLEY.”

Probably the best estimate of Wesley's character and career is in “Asbury's Journal,” under date of Friday, April 29, 1791 :

“The solemn news reached my ears that the public papers had announced the death of that dear man of God, John Wesley, who died in his own house in London in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after preaching the gospel sixty-four years. When we consider his plain and nervous writings, his uncommon talent for sermonizing and journalizing ; that he had such a steady flow of animal spirits, so much of the spirit of government in him ; his knowledge as an observer, his attainments as a scholar, his experience as a Christian—I conclude, his equal is not to be found among all the sons he hath brought up, nor his superior among all the sons of Adam he may have left behind.”

The great length of John Wesley's life was of incalculable advantage to Methodism and to spiritual Christianity ; for it perpetuated the organization, and admitted of all possible experiments, the rejection of failures, and the improvement of methods worthy of permanent adoption. This was done under an autocratic authority inspired by one desire, the promotion of Christ's kingdom ; an authority which lost no influence by confessions of error or change, and was superior to opposition by reason of his financial grasp upon the property of the connection and his control of appointments.

Except that which would arise on the death of the



founder, all crises in the movement had been met and successfully passed; and the best preparation of which he was capable, with the aid of trusted personal and legal counsel, had been made by the passage of an act of Parliament constituting and perpetuating a body which should hold the property, maintain the institutions, the doctrines, and the conference, and periodically distribute the ministers when the ruler of Methodism should be no more.

The honors showered upon him during his old age contributed much to the preservation and increase of the respect shown to Methodism, and to its general recognition as an important factor in modern civilization. When, after having long been spoken of by men chary of compliments and unsympathetic with religious enthusiasm as "the noblest old man in England," it was announced that he had gone hence forever, the controversies which had accompanied his earlier career, and had been revived and intensified by his ordination of Coke and Whatcoat and the establishment of an independent church in the United States, subsided; and all who wrote or spoke of him, except incorrigible bigots, found it easy to say nothing but good of the dead. Irritation caused by Wesley's interference in the affairs of this country had already passed away, and to be a "follower of Wesley" was no longer a sign of contention.

Although disturbances arose among the Methodists of England, the parliamentary deed which secured the property, and the Legal Hundred who held the power, maintained the body intact. Those controversies did not affect Methodism in this country.

Not less than the long life of Wesley and the fact of his death did the manner of his departure contribute to the religious growth of his own people, and of all who were favorably affected toward him. On the 25th of February

he grew very ill; but on the 27th seemed better, and repeated one of his brother's hymns:

Till glad I lay this body down,  
Thy service, Lord, attend;  
And oh, my life of mercy crown  
With a triumphant end!

On the next day he repeated to himself, "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus." On the morning of March 1st he asked for a pen, but was unable to write. A friend offered to write for him, and said, "Tell me what you wish to say." "Nothing," he replied, "but that God is with us," and began to sing, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath." He made some remarks about what should be done after his death, took each one by the hand, and said, "Farewell! farewell!" He asked that his sermon on "The Love of God to Fallen Men" "might be scattered abroad and given to everybody." His last word was "Farewell," and without a groan or sigh he was gone. The account of the closing scenes, which took place in the presence of eleven friends, including his physician, filled Methodists throughout the world with praise; and since that day multitudes have approached death with confidence, inspired by the recollection of the manner of his departure and a personal experience of his declaration, "The best of all is, God is with us." Of John Wesley more than of any other minister of the gospel since the death of St. John—with the possible exception of Martin Luther—it may be said assuredly, "He, being dead, yet speaketh."

## CHAPTER XI.

### OUT OF THE OLD CENTURY INTO THE NEW.

COKE sailed for London on the 14th of May, 1791.

General protest compelled the bishops to consent to indefinite postponement of the Council; thus it was tacitly abolished, and none too soon, for it had "brought on such opposition in the minds of the preachers and people that it was hard to reconcile them one to another."

The General Conference assembled November 1, 1792, in Baltimore. No official record is extant; but Lee was present, and has preserved in his "History" a synopsis of the proceedings.

James O'Kelly, of Virginia, proposed a radical change, to the effect that "after the bishop appoints the preachers at conference to their several circuits, if any one think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the conference and state his objections; and if the conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit."

O'Kelly became a Methodist preacher in 1778, was ordained in 1784, and sent to a region in which he had attained popularity, and where for the eight years preceding this conference he had continued as presiding elder. He had come into note as a representative of the preachers against the authority and life-tenure of the superintendents, and was supported in his propositions by Freeborn Garrettson, Richard Ivey, Hope Hull, and others of equal

weight. The chief debaters on the other side were Henry Willis, Jesse Lee, Thomas Morrell, Joseph Everett, and Nelson Reed.

Lee and Ware state that the arguments for and against the proposition were weighty, and handled in a masterly way.

Asbury's account of the matter is:

"Some individuals among the preachers having their jealousies about my influence in the conference, I gave the matter wholly up to them and to Dr. Coke, who presided. Meantime I sent them the following letter:

"MY DEAR BRETHREN: Let my absence give you no pain; Dr. Coke presides. I am happily excused from assisting to make laws by which myself am to be governed; I have only to obey and execute. I am happy in the consideration that I never stationed a brother through enmity or as a punishment. I have acted for the glory of God, the good of the people, and to promote the usefulness of the preachers. Are you sure that if you please yourselves the people will be as fully satisfied? They often say, "Let us have such a brother;" and sometimes, "We will not have such a brother; we will sooner pay him to stay at home." Perhaps I must say, "His appeal forced him upon you." I am one; ye are many. I am as willing to serve you as ever. I want not to sit in any man's way. I scorn to solicit votes. I am a very trembling, poor creature to hear praise or dispraise. Speak your minds freely; but remember you are only making laws for the present time. It may be that, as in other things so in this, a future day may give you further light. I am,

"Yours, etc.,

"FRANCIS ASBURY."

Ware says that when the proposition was broached he did not see anything objectionable in it; but when it came

to be debated, he disliked the spirit of those who advocated it, and wondered at their severity against what they had formerly defended. "Some of them said that it was a shame for a man to *accept* of such a lordship, much more to *claim* it. . . . One said that 'to be denied such an appeal was an insult to his understanding, and a species of tyranny to which others might submit, . . . but he could not.'"

O'Kelly's opponents replied that such assertions were reflections upon Wesley, who founded the plan and executed it until his death, and that to allow the appeal would make the itinerancy impracticable.

Ware thus concluded an interesting report of the debate: "Hearing all that was said on both sides, I was finally convinced that the motion for such an appeal ought not to carry."<sup>1</sup>

On the final vote O'Kelly's proposition was defeated by a large majority.

The next morning a letter was received from him and others, informing the conference that, because an appeal from the decision of a superintendent in the making of appointments was not to be allowed, they could no longer sit with the body. Garrettson and two others were appointed to treat with him. He remained in the city, and had an interview with Bishop Coke, raising many objections against him and against the conference; the committee could not prevail, and he and the preachers whom he was able to persuade set off for Virginia.

The conference revised the Form of Discipline, but made no alterations affecting the essentials of doctrine and discipline. It was decided to convene another General Conference in four years, and that all traveling preachers who should at that time be in full connection should be entitled

<sup>1</sup> "Memoir of Rev. Thomas Ware," pp. 221, 222.

to a seat. Provision was made for the formation of districts, which was committed to the judgment of the bishops, who also were to appoint the time of holding district conferences. In the event of the death of bishops, or of their inability to travel through the districts, they should be regulated in every respect by the conference or presiding elders, ordination excepted. A rule was made for the trial of bishops, and the office of presiding elder was defined and made legal. For several years prior to this such officers had been appointed by the bishop, though some doubted his power to make such appointments.

The first rule limiting by time the tenure of a particular class of ministers was enacted at this conference; it provided that the bishops should not have power to appoint an elder to preside in the same district more than four successive years.

When the conference adjourned, Asbury hastened to the center of conflict in Virginia. O'Kelly had already induced William McKendree and several other preachers to decline to go to their appointments. By wise management Asbury effected a temporary compromise, which included a proposition to give O'Kelly, whose health was impaired, forty pounds per annum, the amount which he received as a presiding elder, provided he would forbear to excite divisions. He accepted the offer, and for some time received the appropriation, but afterward relinquished it.

The contests between the Republicans and Federalists were strenuous and exciting. The Republicans prevailed, and O'Kelly formed a church with the title of Republican Methodists. One traveling and several local preachers agreed with him, and they held conference after conference, promising great privileges to lay members. In some places they led away whole societies, and in others threw the church into confusion. Some meeting-houses they seized,

and others the Methodists left in order to avoid contention. As the feud increased, O'Kelly became violent, and denounced Methodist ordination as spurious; yet himself proceeded to ordain others, and also to preach heretical doctrines. The church divided upon the name, and some proposed to call themselves the Christian Church; others objected, holding that this would imply that there were no Christians but of their own party. Finally several of his preachers seceded, and in less than ten years they became so divided and subdivided that it was hard to find two of one opinion.<sup>1</sup>

A similar division grew out of the personal interests of William Hammett, who had been minister of the Wesleyan connection in England, and more recently a preacher in the West Indies, and who came to this country early in 1791. After preaching in Charleston, S. C., New York, and Baltimore, he returned to Charleston and left the Methodists, drawing off a large number of the Society and a few of the preachers, who took the name of Primitive Methodists, but their success was of short duration.

Among Hammett's adherents was William Meredith, who built a large meeting-house in Wilmington, N. C., and collected a numerous society of colored people, exerting an excellent influence over them. Difficulties arising between Hammett and himself, they separated. Meredith continued to prosper, and when his meeting-house was burned he erected one still larger, and at his death bequeathed to the Methodist Episcopal Church the meeting-house, a residence, and, so far as he could influence their choice, the members of his society.

Nineteen conferences were held in 1793, and twelve extensive circuits with indefinite boundaries (one being entitled the Province of Maine) were added.

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," pp. 202, 203.

Bishop Asbury traveled as though determined to compass the entire territory included within the United States. At one place in South Carolina a gentleman refused to receive him "for love, money, or hospitality's sake," and he was compelled to apply at the negro quarters. Soon afterward he was in Kentucky selecting sites for schools, and encountering serious opposition owing to the wild state of the country. The brethren were obliged to travel armed, and formed a company of fourteen or fifteen for defense against their chief foes, the Indians.

The success of Methodism in New England occasioned systematic demonstrations of hostility. Magistrates in Connecticut would not recognize the preachers as regular ministers. George Roberts was fined for uniting two Methodists in marriage, and various members of the Society were thrown into prison. Gangs of "lewd fellows of the baser sort," with the implied sanction of the better class, often disturbed their meetings. Little was gained by their opponents in oral debate; for almost all the Methodist preachers were competent to defend themselves. Thomas Ware was even more successful in logical argument than Jesse Lee, although making no use of satire, which was so effective a weapon in the hands of the latter. Hope Hull was so persuasively eloquent that few could resist him.

Nathan Williams, A.M., a Congregational minister, who had gladly received the Methodist preachers, foreseeing the formation of a new denomination, which he honestly deprecated, delivered and published a sermon against them. It was accompanied by a letter from Dr. Huntington, of Coventry, Conn.

This pamphlet was issued with "the unanimous approbation of the Congregational Association, and at their cordial request."



Mr. Williams denounced the pretension of a divine call to the ministry, claiming that it is tempting Heaven to give the pretender over to delusion. Dr. Huntington alleged that "the modern teachers are men of Machiavellian principles, and do without any scruples make use of truth and deceit promiscuously, as they judge will most promote the interest of their party." He describes John Wesley as "a flaming enthusiast, given to wild singularities," pointing out classes and class-meetings as among these.

Roberts replied with striking ability and power of sarcasm, and had an advantage in the tendency of the popular mind, which was against the compulsory support of the church by taxation. Just before he delivered his reply, a Baptist in the vicinity had been imprisoned for refusing to pay the parish minister's rate on the ground that he could not approve his creed.

Methodist preachers soon began to avoid discussion whenever possible, finding that the primary object of their ministry, the conversion of souls, could be more effectually promoted by their lives and labors than by controversy, though for years it was necessary, on certain occasions, to vindicate their doctrines against misrepresentation, and their characters against false charges, not only in New England, but in all parts of the United States. Mr. Williams, on further acquaintance, perceiving only good effects from their labors, "before he died welcomed his Methodist brethren to hold prayer-meetings in his own house."

Thomas Paine, who, during the War of the Revolution, had rendered to this country valuable services, was publishing his deistical works, which were widely circulated, and received by many with avidity. When Asbury preached in the woods at the town of Bennington, Vt., he found a large congregation, made up of deists and various sorts of unbelievers.

The secession of O'Kelly reached its height in 1795, and, combined with other impediments, caused a decrease of 4673 members among the whites, which, augmented by a decrease of 1644 among the colored, made a net loss of nearly 6500. There was, however, an increase of 32 preachers.

Soon after Daniel Boone settled in Kentucky, Methodist local preachers followed, and a few years later Barnabas McHenry, who, by intellect, piety, and labor, made rapid progress, and was appointed presiding elder in four years after he entered the ministry, which occurred before he was quite twenty. He became a master of the English language, a theologian, a proficient student of the Greek New Testament, with sufficient knowledge of Hebrew and Latin to enable him to consult authorities with facility. Although suffering from disease induced by hardship, no minister of the State, of whatever denomination, maintained higher intellectual or moral rank. Indeed, "the adventures and hairbreadth escapes of McHenry, Lee, Kobler, Cook, Ogden, Burke, Garrett, and others would furnish a modern Tasso with matter for an epic."<sup>1</sup>

Cokesbury College was burned on December 7, 1795. The building was of brick, three stories in height, one hundred and eight feet in length, and forty feet in breadth. Intended to provide for the education of the sons of ministers, for orphans, and for Methodist people generally, it seems to have failed for a variety of reasons. In 1789 it had thirty students, ten partly supported by charity, and some maintained, clothed, and educated gratuitously; Bishop Asbury was greatly encouraged by a revival among the students in that year. By 1792 the number had increased to seventy, and young gentlemen of good social position from the Southern States went to Cokesbury to complete their

<sup>1</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. iii., p. 296.

studies. The college was incorporated January 26, 1794, and authorized to confer degrees and enjoy other privileges and prerogatives guaranteed to regular colleges; but the New York Conference resolved, in view of its embarrassed condition, that nothing but an English free day-school should be kept there, and the number of professors was reduced to two.

About twelve o'clock on the night of the calamity the students were roused by the cry of "Fire!" The conflagration could not be extinguished, and the building was destroyed, with the library, philosophical apparatus, and important papers. The governor offered a reward of one thousand dollars for the supposed incendiaries, but could obtain no information sufficient to justify arrests.

Asbury's record was characteristic: "We have now a second and confirmed account that Cokesbury College is consumed to ashes, a sacrifice of ten thousand pounds sterling in about ten years! . . . Its enemies may rejoice, and its friends need not mourn. Would any man give me ten thousand per year to do and suffer again what I have done for that house, I would not do it. The Lord called neither Mr. Whitefield nor the Methodists to build colleges. I wished only for schools; Dr. Coke wanted a college. I feel distressed at the loss of the library."

The second regular General Conference assembled in Baltimore on the 20th of October, 1796, one hundred and twenty ministers in attendance. An address was received from the British Conference. It reaffirmed the cardinal principles of Methodism, and exhorted the people in America called Methodists to increased fidelity and zeal, concluding:

"We consider you a branch of the same root from which we sprang, and of which we can never think but with

inexpressible gratitude. . . . We are, dearly beloved brethren,

“ Your truly affectionate brethren in Christ Jesus,

“ THE ENGLISH CONFERENCE.

“ Signed by order and in behalf of the conference.

“ THOMAS TAYLOR, *President*,

“ SAMUEL BRADBURN, *Secretary*.”

Various important rules were enacted, among them a Deed of Settlement for the security of preaching-houses and all premises appertaining thereto; also a requirement that every traveling deacon should exercise his office for two years before being eligible to that of elder, except in the case of missions, when the Yearly Conferences might elect the elders sooner if expedient; an address and a system of regulations concerning the education of youth in seminaries were adopted, and ordered to be printed in the minutes.

A rule declaring that the student shall be “ indulged with nothing that the world calls play ” has been made a subject of ridicule, but only by those ignorant of what was intended. It was “ worldly ” games—cards, theaters, dancing, and every species of play technically so called—to which objection was made. Tradition says that these students leaped, ran, wrestled, and exhibited without restraint those natural impulses for healthful exercises in a sportive mood, and were allowed in all their so-called recreations the privileges of conversation, jovial laughter, and every form of pleasing social intercourse. If health, clearness of mind, rapid progress in learning, a situation favorable for forming habits of morality, and a well-grounded religious character be considered the ends sought by the instruction of youth, the system was almost perfect. Wherever it was applied, the proficiency and health of the students was a matter of common remark.

The "Chartered Fund" was to be supported by voluntary contributions, the principal being funded under the direction of trustees, and the interest applied, according to certain regulations, for the relief of "distressed traveling preachers, their families, worn-out preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers." A pathetic description of the sufferings, premature death, and dire distress of those in "age and feebleness extreme," and of widows and orphans, is made the basis of an earnest appeal, which was strengthened by the fact that many of the most efficient had been "obliged to retire from the general work because they saw nothing before them for their wives and children, if they continued itinerants, but misery and ruin."

Additional stringent rules were made against slavery.

The conference explained that Methodists were "not prohibited from marrying persons not of the Society," provided such "have the form and are seeking the power of godliness." If they wedded those who did not come up to this description it would be necessary to expel them. In a doubtful case the member of the Society must be "put back upon trial."

The regulations concerning the sale and use of spirituous liquors are:

*Ques.* What directions shall be given concerning the sale and use of spirituous liquors?

*Ans.* If any member of our Society retail or give spirituous liquors, and anything disorderly be transacted under his roof on this account, the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit shall proceed against him as in the case of other immoralities; and the person accused shall be cleared, censured, suspended, or excluded, according to his conduct, as on other charges of immorality."

This does not prohibit the retailing or giving of spirituous liquors, or subject the member to penalty or inquiry,

unless something disorderly is transacted "under his roof" on account of the effects of the liquor. The conference adds this note: "Far be it from us to wish or endeavor to intrude upon the private religious or civil liberty of any of our people; but the retailing of spirituous liquors, and giving drams to customers when they call at the stores, are such prevalent customs at present, and are productive of so many evils, that we judge it our indispensable duty to form a regulation against them. The cause of God, which we prefer to every other consideration under heaven, absolutely requires us to step forth with humble boldness in this respect."

It was ordered that another bishop should be elected and ordained. After this decision was reached a difficulty arose concerning the manner of choosing or electing a man to be ordained a bishop, and before the point was settled Coke begged that the business should be laid over until the afternoon, which was done. "When we met in the afternoon," continues Lee, "the doctor offered himself to us if we saw cause to take him, and promised to serve us in the best manner he could, and to be entirely at the disposal of his American brethren, and to live or die among them."<sup>1</sup> The conference agreed to this proposition, and concluded two bishops would be sufficient if he remained. Coke then presented the following instrument:

"I offer myself to my American brethren entirely to their service, all I am and have, with my talents and labors in every respect, without any mental reservation whatsoever, to labor among them, and to assist Bishop Asbury; not to station the preachers at any time when he is present, but to exercise all the episcopal duties when I hold a conference in his absence and by his consent; and to

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Methodists," p. 247.

visit the West Indies and France when there is an opening, and I can be spared.

“ Signed,

“ THOMAS COKE.

“ CONFERENCE ROOM, BALTIMORE,

“ October 27, 1796.”

In this year there was a loss of 2627 members; for three years there had been an annual decline, amounting in all to nearly 11,000 members. The losses were mostly in the Middle States, where prevailed the divisive spirit of which O’Kelly was the chief center. The number of preachers admitted on trial was ten less than the number lost from the traveling connection. Nine had died, twenty-eight located, two had withdrawn, and one had been expelled.

On the 6th of February, 1797, Coke embarked for England. Asbury traveled to and fro, but on account of illness was obliged to rest four months in the year. Accompanied by Lee, he went as far north as Maine in April, 1798, returning South in October. He urged Lee to return and assist him in the South: “ You and every man who thinks properly will find that it will never do to divide the North from the South. Methodism is union all over: union in exchange of preachers, union in exchange of sentiments, union in exchange of interest. We must draw resources from the center to the circumference.”

In 1797 there was an addition of about 2000 members; 39 young preachers were admitted on trial, 43 of the traveling preachers located, 2 were expelled, and 2 died.

Unable to attend the conference in New England, Asbury wrote Lee a mournful letter “ respecting the sufferings of his body,” asking him to travel with him, or in case of necessity to take his appointments in the South. The conference by vote chose Lee to preside and to station the

preachers, and at the close gave him a certificate signifying their approbation of the bishop's plan for their traveling together.

Wherever Asbury went he gave up the presidency to the presiding elders, and in his addresses to the conferences deplored the weakness of the episcopacy.

There was an increase of 1506 members in 1798. The death of John Dickins, of the yellow fever, in Philadelphia, in the fifty-second year of his age, was declared in the minutes to be "more sensibly felt than that of any other preacher who has died since American Methodism arose." His services cannot be overestimated. It was he who proposed the title of "The Methodist Episcopal Church." Four years before Coke's arrival he had suggested to Asbury the plan of a Methodist academic institution. He was born and educated in London, was a master of Latin and Greek, and was especially learned in mathematics. He founded the Methodist Book Concern, and "his skill and fidelity as editor, inspector, and corrector of the press were exceedingly great." Ezekiel Cooper was appointed editor and general book-steward, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Dickins.

Methodism was established in Augusta, Ga., in 1799, and Tobias Gibson preached at Natchez, on the Mississippi, being the first Methodist preacher that went into that wilderness. Although so ill as to be unable to take a circuit, and making the tour for the benefit of his health, he was the means of the conversion of many settlers and of the establishment of a society.

The total number of members in 1799 was 61,351, of whom, as before, about one in five were colored. The number of traveling preachers was 272. There were three deaths among the ministers, the most noteworthy being that of Hezekiah Calvin Wooster, who commenced his ministry



in Massachusetts in 1793, later spending two years upon circuits in New Jersey and New York, and in Canada toiling three years, preaching almost daily.

The year 1800 was very prosperous, and in every part of the country there was a gain except in Pennsylvania, where was a decrease of 122.

The third regular General Conference assembled in Baltimore on the 6th of May, 119 being present.

Asbury had informed preachers in different parts of the connection that on account of mental weariness and physical feebleness he intended to resign his position as superintendent of the Methodist connection, and would take his seat in the conference on a level with the elders; and he had written his resignation with the intention to deliver it as soon as the conference met. He was therefore asked to state what he had determined to do. In response he said that his affliction had been such that he had been under the necessity of having a companion, that his debility had several times obliged him to locate, that he could only travel in a carriage, and he did not know whether this conference as a body was satisfied with such parts of his conduct.

On motion of Cooper, the conference unanimously resolved that they "considered themselves under many and great obligations to Mr. Asbury for the many and great services he has rendered to this connection; . . . and that this General Conference do earnestly entreat Mr. Asbury for a continuation of his services as one of the general superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as far as his strength will permit."<sup>1</sup>

The situation concerning the episcopacy was seriously complicated. When Coke returned from England in 1797, he brought an address from the British Conference to

<sup>1</sup> "General Conference Journals," vol. i., p. 33.

American Methodists, in which they urged that he might be allowed to return to Europe speedily.

The address was submitted to the Virginia Conference, and Asbury, with their approbation, addressed a letter to the British Conference, and then unofficially consented to Coke's tarrying for a time in England, which the latter having done, he now appeared to fulfill his engagement made in 1796 or to be honorably released. The conference complied with the request of the English body upon condition that Coke return to America as soon as his business would allow, but certainly by the next General Conference.

It was decided by a large majority that one bishop should be elected and ordained, and that the vote should be taken by ballot.

Various propositions were rejected, which if adopted would have made Methodism something radically different from that which it has become, and it was determined that the bishops were to be equal in every particular.

The result of the first ballot, which was "supposed defective," was a tie, and upon the second there were fifty-nine votes for Richard Whatcoat, fifty-five for Jesse Lee, and one blank. Whatcoat was in the sixty-fifth year of his age when elected. As a preacher, his pathos was all-subduing, so that congregations were moved "as the leaves of a forest by the power of a mighty wind." To this, says Dr. Bangs, was added a meekness and modesty of spirit which, united with simplicity of intention and gravity of deportment, commended him as a pattern worthy of imitation. "Under the guise of a modest and unassuming manner he also possessed, like his old friend and classmate, Asbury, though in an inferior degree, the gift and faculty of authority."<sup>1</sup>

It was shown that the existing rule which prevented the

<sup>1</sup> "Lives of Methodist Bishops," p. 116.

members from increasing the number of their slaves by purchase tolerated an increase by birth, and also that the removal of members from one State to another caused the leaving of a husband or a wife behind held in bondage by another, thus separating man and wife, which was a violation of the laws of God, and contrary to the peace and happiness of families. After the rejection of various propositions to strengthen the rule, a committee was appointed to prepare an affectionate address to the Methodist societies, pointing out the evil of the spirit and practice of slavery, and the necessity of doing away with it so far as the laws of the respective States would allow, and that the said address be laid before the conference for its consideration, and if agreed to, be signed by the bishops. A committee was also appointed to draft proper addresses to the State legislatures from year to year for the gradual abolition of slavery. It was also ordered that if by any means any of the traveling preachers became owners of a slave or slaves they should forfeit their ministerial character in the Methodist Episcopal Church, unless, if practicable, they executed legal emancipation of such slave or slaves.

A greater revival took place in Baltimore at this conference than had occurred during the session of any previous General Conference. The sermon preached on Sunday morning by Coke was followed by the ordination of Whatcoat to the office of bishop by Coke and Asbury, assisted by several elders. Henry Boehm, traveling companion of Asbury, and intimately acquainted with Whatcoat, characterizes the scene in a single sentence: "Never were holy hands laid upon a holier head." Lee preached a wonderful sermon in the market-house that afternoon.

As the preachers returned to their stations they naturally carried with them the influence of this revival, and lighted similar flames wherever they went.

In and near the place where was held the first Annual Conference after the adjournment of the General Conference, not far from Baltimore, within a few days one hundred and seventeen joined the Society. At the same time in Tennessee and Kentucky arose the most remarkable revival of religion ever seen in the West. In Philadelphia, in the western part of Maryland, in Vermont, in New Hampshire, in Connecticut, especially in the Tolland circuit and in New London, there was a greater work in the conversion of souls than had ever been known. Similar results followed the preaching of Methodist ministers during the year 1801, many thousands being added to the societies.

During this period "camp-meetings" arose. Late in 1799 or early in 1800 John and William Magee, brothers, the first a Methodist local preacher, the second a Presbyterian minister, started from their settlement in Tennessee to make a preaching-tour into Kentucky. Such interest attended their work that at the next meeting many families encamped in the woods. The coöperation of these brothers was so pleasing an example of fraternity that the earliest camp-meetings included members of every denomination.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes as many as twenty thousand were present. Presbyterian and Methodist ministers united in the work. The assemblage divided into groups, which were addressed by as many speakers. So many were struck to the ground at one meeting that, to prevent their being trodden underfoot by the multitude, they were laid out in order on two squares of the central meeting-house. But at another meeting, at Cane Ridge, the number that fell was reckoned at three thousand, among whom were several Presbyterian ministers, who, according to their own confession, had previously possessed only a speculative knowledge of religion.

The Presbyterians ceased to take interest in the meetings

<sup>1</sup> "Methodist Magazine" for 1821, p. 189.

because of the excitement which attended them. It was not in harmony with the genius of that body.

Able men were recruited by Western Methodism for the ministry, among them Jacob Young. Philip Gatch, so effective in the East, had now become influential in Ohio. For years he sat as a magistrate on the bench of the Court of Common Pleas, and was a delegate to the convention which framed the State constitution. Scott, another of the early Methodist preachers, became judge of the Supreme Court of Ohio; and the societies, instead of being regarded as ephemeral, in a very few years included among their members many, and in some sections most, of the substantial citizens.

A revival in 1801 extended along the shore of Lake Ontario to Niagara, and thence to Long Point on the northwestern shore of Lake Erie. The Long Point circuit was formed in the latter part of 1802, chiefly through the labors of Nathan Bangs. Among the names not to be forgotten are those of James Coleman, C. Warner, a layman, Sylvanus Keeler, and Seth Crowell. The work also extended into Lower Canada.

Antislavery agitations, and especially the resolutions of Methodist conferences memorializing legislatures against slavery, created a serious disturbance in Charleston, S. C., where were stationed George Dougherty and John Harper. Harper had received some pamphlets containing those resolutions, and that fact, becoming known, caused great excitement. The obnoxious documents were demanded by the mayor, and burned in his presence; and a mob gathered to assault Harper, who escaped; but his colleague, Dougherty, was dragged to the pump, and would have been suffocated had not Mrs. Kingsley, a godly woman, rushed forward and, placing herself between the crowd and their victim, stuffed her shawl into the spout. Astonished,

they paused, and at that instant a gentleman of high character stepped with drawn sword among them, took Dougherty by the hand, and, declaring his purpose to protect him at all hazards, led him away.

Dougherty was a native of South Carolina, early became a Methodist, and, being a teacher, was subject to persecution as the "Methodist schoolmaster," and treated with indignity by every crowd through which he passed. Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit"<sup>1</sup> contains an elaborate description of him by Lovick Pierce, who had frequently heard him preach, and who says that his supremacy as a preacher in his day was never disputed by any competent witness. The effects of the exposure which he endured by being drenched with cold water in the way described were permanent. He sank into consumption, and died prematurely.

There was a difficulty in the Methodist church of Philadelphia in 1802, which resulted in the withdrawal of many members. They adhered to the doctrines of Methodism, and wished to be governed by its discipline, but not being able to harmonize with those from whom they seceded, they established a separate place of worship in a building erected for an academy by George Whitefield. Nevertheless they made an appeal to the bishop to send them a Methodist preacher, and it was agreed, with only one dissenting vote, that their request should be granted on such terms as the bishop could make. This furnished a precedent for similar adjustments elsewhere.

Methodism was now rapidly increasing, adding 33 preachers in the year 1803, and 17,366 members, of whom a little more than one quarter were colored.

<sup>1</sup> Pages 291-295.

## CHAPTER XII.

### TROUBLOUS YET SUCCESSFUL YEARS.

THE fourth regular General Conference convened in Baltimore, May 7, 1804, with Coke, Asbury, and Whatcoat present.

Coke moved that "no regulation or law should finally pass the conference until it had been read at three distinct sittings, and had received the approbation of the conference each time." This attempt to introduce English parliamentary law was defeated by fifty-six negative votes in a total of one hundred and three. He then moved that "no *new* regulation or law should finally pass the conference until it had been read at three distinct sittings." This also was lost.

The Articles of Religion had been adopted prior to the close of the Revolutionary War; consequently the words "Constitution of the United States" were now substituted for the "General Act of Confederation," and the declaration was inserted that the said States are a "sovereign and independent nation," and "ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction."

Only those who had "regularly traveled four years" were eligible to membership in the General Conference, and it resolved that the time of any preacher's traveling under the direction of a presiding elder should not be reckoned as a part of his probation, which should date

from his reception by a conference. This action determined the ineligibility of Taylor of the Western Conference, and Ryan, Lyon, Gruber, and Knowlton of the Philadelphia. It would appear that considerable excitement attended some of the debates; for Bishop Whatcoat "arose to recommend the separation of passion or ill will in debate, and that reason should rule in every loving contest."<sup>1</sup> Coke was allowed to return to Europe, on condition that he should hold himself subject to the call of three of the Annual Conferences to return, and at the furthest should attend the next General Conference.

After long discussion of several motions on slavery, Freeborn Garrettson moved that "the subject of slavery be left to the three bishops, to form a section to suit the Southern and Northern States as they in their wisdom may think best, to be submitted to the conference." Bishop Asbury refused to act upon that vote, the result of which was a variety of motions, ending in the adoption of a resolution, proposed by Ezekiel Cooper, that "a committee be formed, one from each conference, to take the different motions and report concerning slavery." Finally an elaborate system was adopted, reaffirming the evil, instructing the conference and elders to be cautious in admitting persons to official stations, requiring security from slave-holders, and compelling any traveling preacher becoming the owner of a slave to forfeit his ministerial authority unless he would execute a legal emancipation conformable to the law of his State. To every slave-holder the preacher must speak fully and faithfully on this subject, and every member of the Society selling a slave, except at his or her request in cases of mercy and humanity, with the approbation of a committee of three male members appointed by the preacher, shall be excluded from the Society. It

<sup>1</sup> "General Conference Journals," vol. i., p. 53.



was ordered that if any member purchased a slave he should submit to the judgment of the Quarterly Conference, which should fix the number of years which the said slave must serve to redeem himself; and the owner should be excluded if he would not conform and execute a legal instrument, varying as the slave was male or female, and providing for the manumission of children. And if any member of the Society bought a slave with a certificate of future emancipation, the terms thereof should be subject to the decision of the Quarterly Conference. But this stringent paragraph closes thus: "Nevertheless the membership of our societies in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia shall be exempted from the operation of the above rules."

A motion to abolish presiding elders was lost after long debate by a very narrow margin. Authority was given to remove the Book Concern from Philadelphia to New York, and Cooper was reëlected general superintendent thereof. Although the conference ostensibly sat in secret session, a resolution was passed admitting as spectators official members of the church. A resolution of unusual importance was passed which provided that the bishop should not allow any preacher to remain in the same station more than two years successively, except the presiding elders, superannuated and worn-out preachers. A motion to add to this "except in cases of sickness of families" was lost.

The tendency to increased length of term of service had become marked. As the city of New York was in the hands of the British, and thereby communication with the conference was cut off, Samuel Spraggs, by arrangement with the people, had served as pastor of John Street for five years in succession; yet it was thought by the conference a wise policy to appoint him for a sixth year,

associating with him John Dickins, who was reappointed the next year.

Wesley wrote to Asbury, September 30, 1785: "At the next conference it will be worth your while to consider deeply whether any preacher should stay in one place three years together. I startle at this. It is a vehement alteration in the Methodist discipline. We have no such custom in England, Scotland, or Ireland."

Asbury wrote to Thomas Morrell in 1793: "I am convinced there ought to be a change generally, presiding elders and others; this I aim at, but there are great difficulties. I see the propriety of having men to command that are firmly fixed in our church government and are as heartily united to the president of the connection. All my woods and wilderness troubles vanish in a moment when I have to take one single grain of conference tartar."<sup>1</sup>

A case which some years later gave Asbury trouble was that of the Rev. Cyrus Stebbins. A man of influence with the cultivated classes, he had been stationed in Brooklyn and New York, and was in 1800 appointed to Albany, reappointed the next year, and again, and for a fourth time. More than one of these appointments were made against the convictions and wishes of Asbury, under the pressure of Stebbins and a self-constituted committee claiming to represent the society, and under the threat that to remove him would rend the church. When Stebbins was removed he became dissatisfied, and withdrew from the Methodists, becoming a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in which body he commanded the respect of bishops, clergy, and laity. Wakeley states that the reason for withdrawal which Stebbins assigned was unbelief in the doctrine of Christian perfection as held by Methodists.

<sup>1</sup> No. 17 of the Morrell Letters, "Christian Advocate and Journal," February 13, 1851.

A detailed history of the origin of this time-limit was communicated in a letter to the "Christian Advocate" by the late Aaron Hunt, over the signature of "Luther."

"The circumstances which led to the adoption of that rule are not fully known at this day. Soon after the commencement of the present century two or three cases occurred which gave the Bishop great annoyance. Some preachers, finding themselves in pleasant stations, and (by the aid of self-constituted committees) believing, of course, that they could do better in the place than any one else, objected to removal, while the more pious part of the society would have preferred a change, but the officious committee prevailed. One of these unhappy cases came under our personal knowledge when in company with the Bishop, which gave the venerable Asbury much anxiety, seeing that to *remove the incumbent would rend the society*, and that to leave him would *result in injury to the Church*. Finally *they* prevailed, and evil followed. In conversation with the bishop we suggested the above rule, to which he pleasantly replied, 'So, then, you would restrict the appointing power?' 'Nay, sir,' was the reply; 'we would aid its execution, for in the present case it seems to be deficient.'

"His laconic reply of 'So, so,' encouraged me at the ensuing General Conference of 1804 to present the resolution, which was signed and seconded by the Rev. Joseph Totten, of the Philadelphia Conference. . . . Of course it was laid on the table for the present. It was talked over out of doors, and scanned in all its bearings by the fireside, and when called up again, after some discussion, it passed with a very general vote."<sup>1</sup>

Papers in the hands of Dr. Albert S. Hunt, secretary of the American Bible Society, and grandson of Aaron Hunt,

<sup>1</sup> "Christian Advocate," July 12, 1883.

show that the case referred to in his letter was that of Stebbins.

Lee's account of the matter is: "In some cases prior to that rule the bishop had appointed a preacher or preachers to the same place for three years together. We now determined on a better plan, and formed this rule to prevent any preacher from wishing or expecting such an appointment in future."<sup>1</sup>

For a considerable period after the Revolutionary War the Methodism of the British provinces was connected directly with that of the United States. Methodism began in Nova Scotia in 1779, as a result of the conversion of William Black, who had been led to embrace its doctrines and seek its experience by conversation with certain Methodists newly arrived from Yorkshire, and by the reading of the Rev. John Wesley's sermons. Black was zealous and sagacious, and seven years later visited Coke and Asbury at the Christmas conference. He also went to Philadelphia and New York, and was ordained by Coke as deacon and elder, and obtained from the American conference six additional missionaries for the colonies. In the minutes of American Methodism for 1791 the preachers for the provinces were thus distributed: William Black, elder; Halifax, William Jessop, John Mann; Liverpool, Thomas Whitehead; Shelburne, William Early; Cumberland, Benjamin Fidler; Newport, John Cooper; St. Johns, John Ragan; Annapolis, James Boyd.

But these were not the first American preachers appointed to the Eastern provinces, for at the Christmas conference Freeborn Garrettson volunteered for Nova Scotia, and embarked for Halifax, where he established a society. He was accompanied by James O. Cromwell.

The progress of Methodism in these colonies under the

<sup>1</sup> Lee's "History of the Methodists," pp. 298, 299.

preaching and superintendence of the men thus sent forth was most encouraging, and Garrettsen's influence was almost equal to that of Wesley in Europe and Asbury in the United States. The correspondence between Wesley and Garrettsen concerning this work contains information of inestimable value. When Garrettsen sailed from Nova Scotia for Boston, April 10, 1787, he left as evidence of his fidelity and success in his Lord's vineyard about six hundred members in the various societies.

New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton had received Methodism and all its institutions from Nova Scotia prior to 1802, but by 1804 the American preachers were withdrawn from these provinces, and so far as they were supplied it was from England.

According to the best Canadian authorities, Methodism was introduced into the island of Newfoundland by Lawrence Coughland a few months prior to Embury's first sermon in the city of New York. Coughland had been received on trial in 1755 by Wesley. A number of Yorkshire Methodists settled, in 1772, in Nova Scotia, and a year later, when he returned to England, Coughland's work had prospered to such an extent that there were enough local preachers to keep the societies alive for the next twelve years. The British Conference, in 1785, regularly appointed John McGeary to that island. The following year a provincial Methodist conference was held in Halifax, at which five hundred and ten members were reported and six preachers stationed.

A local preacher and soldier named Tuffy had preached the first Methodist sermon in Quebec in 1780, and meetings were held at irregular intervals at different points. George Neal, an Irish local preacher, zealously and effectively preached in the vicinity of Fort Niagara six years later. But in the year 1790 William Losee, a preacher on

trial in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, but without a definite appointment, ranging at large, came into the St. Lawrence and Bay Quinté country. The first regular class was organized at Adolphustown, on Sunday, February 20, 1791. Losee returned to the East, and in the minutes of 1791 he appears as stationed by the New York Conference in the Kingston circuit, but the next year was ordained deacon, and appointed to the province of Upper Canada, accompanied by Darius Dunham, who had received elder's orders. They prospered to such an extent that by 1799 Dunham was a presiding elder, with three circuits and four preachers. Samuel Coate was at Oswegatchie, and James Coleman and Michael Coate at Niagara.

Joseph Sawyer, of the New York Conference, visited Montreal in 1802, and formed the first class. The same year Peter Vannest and Nathan Bangs toiled on the Bay Quinté circuit; and Samuel Merwin, of the same conference, who was stationed at Montreal, visited Quebec in 1803.

A district comprising seven hundred and eighty-seven members, known as "Upper and Lower Canada," in 1804 was superintended by Samuel Coate, presiding elder, among whose preachers were Martin Ruter and Nathan Bangs.

Quite early in the history of American Methodism dissatisfaction arose among the colored membership, and it was part of a common tendency among that people in all denominations, growing out of the oppressive spirit of the whites, the direct consequence, if not a necessary concomitant, of slavery. They appear to have been somewhat aroused by Question 25 in the minutes of the Conference of 1780: "Ought not the assistant to meet the colored people himself, and appoint as helpers in his absence proper white persons, and not suffer them to stay late and meet by themselves? *Ans.* Yes."

Most of the young preachers who had been received into the Methodist ministry during the Revolutionary War were born and educated in slave-holding sections. "The Rev. Freeborn Garrettson could truthfully say that he did not know it was wrong. He had never read a book on the subject, or been told that it was wrong."<sup>1</sup> All the conferences between 1776 and 1787 were held in slave-holding States, and in 1783 only about two thousand of the members resided in what in later years were known as the free States.

In Philadelphia, in 1787, the colored people belonging to the Methodist societies met to consider their condition. Being opposed, they withdrew from the church, began a chapel, and Bishop White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, ordained a colored preacher for them. In 1793 Richard Allen, a slave who had bought his freedom and grown rich and influential, erected on his own land, for people of his race, a church. Asbury dedicated this church, which was named Bethel, and the congregation adopted as a part of their platform the following:

"We consider every child of God a member of the mystical body of Christ; . . . yet in the political government of our church we prohibit our white brethren from electing or being elected into any office among us, save that of a preacher or public speaker."

On June 10, 1794, they adopted a declaration of their reasons for desiring a separate place of worship:

"WHEREAS, From time to time, many inconveniences have arisen from white people and people of color mixing together in public assemblies, more particularly in places of public worship, we have thought it necessary to provide for ourselves a convenient house to assemble in separate from our white brethren:

<sup>1</sup> Daniel de Vinne, letter to "Zion's Herald," 1844.

“(1) To obviate any offense our mixing with our white brethren might give them.

“(2) To preserve as much as possible from the crafty wiles of the enemy our weak-minded brethren from taking offense at such partiality as they might be led to think contrary to the spirit of the gospel, in which there is neither male nor female, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, but all are one in Christ Jesus.

“(3) That we might the more freely and fully hold the faith in unity of spirit and the bands of peace together, and build each other up in our most holy faith.”

They adopted a charter, placing their edifice under the control of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but did not execute the deed in the prescribed form. Asbury, on the 11th of June, 1799, ordained Allen a *deacon*, he being the first colored minister so ordained in the United States; and the members of Bethel Church made a contract to remain under the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the jurisdiction of a white *elder*.

The bishops obtained leave, in the General Conference of 1800, “to ordain local deacons of our African brethren in places where they have built a house or houses for the worship of God, provided they have a person among them qualified for the office, and he can obtain an election of two thirds of the male members of the society to which he belongs, and a recommendation from the minister in charge and his fellow-laborers in the city or circuit.” When this rule was formed many of the preachers were opposed to it, especially those from Southern States. Some of these moved that it should not be printed in the Form of Discipline, and a vote of the conference was obtained to enter it only on the journals; and most of the preachers were not willing that it should be made public.

Slavery being legal in the State of New York, there were



many slaves in the metropolis, and a number belonged to Wesley Chapel. They were required to sit in the gallery. Sometimes their masters would not suffer them to come to hear the Word, and in the first letter of Boardman to Wesley, in 1769, he speaks of one who said, "I told my master I would do more work than I used to do if he would let me come—nay, I would do everything in my power to be a good servant." Asbury in 1772 speaks of administering the Lord's Supper to the colored people in New York, and says, "At the table I was greatly affected with the sight of the negroes, seeing their sable faces at the table of the Lord." A number of colored members of the Methodist Episcopal Church wishing to exercise their spiritual gifts among themselves, and thereby, as they thought, be more useful to one another, formed in 1796 what was practically a separate congregation.

The historical introduction to the Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church thus summarizes the causes of complaint on the part of the colored people in the city of New York: "Caste prejudice forbade their taking the sacrament until the white members were all served. This and the desire for other church privileges denied them induced them to organize among themselves, which they did in the year 1796. . . . In the year 1800 they built a church, and called it Zion; . . . which church was, as regards its temporary economy, separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church from its first organization."

A contract was made between that body and the Methodist Episcopal Church, the first sentence of which is: "This article of agreement, made this sixth day of April, 1801, between the Rev. John McClaskey in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of Amer-

<sup>1</sup> "Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America" (A. M. E. Zion Book Concern, New York, 1892), p. 8.

ica of the one part, and the trustees of the A. M. E. Zion Church of the city of New York of the other part, for themselves and their successors in office," etc.<sup>1</sup>

Under this contract, having no ordained ministers of their own race, the church had the services of ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church for about twenty years.

The first Protestant sermon preached in the State of Alabama was delivered by the eccentric Lorenzo Dow, who wandered into that wilderness in 1803, and also traveled there again during the following year, the seed which he sowed bringing forth much fruit. Three years later Asbury applied in the South Carolina Conference at Charleston for missionaries to Alabama, and those who responded reported within two years eighty-six members.

Methodist preachers did not venture until 1802 within what is now the State of Indiana; there were then but a few settlers, and in the year 1807 it contained but one circuit, one preacher, and sixty-seven members.

Illinois had but two hundred and fifteen inhabitants in the year 1800; but four years later Benjamin Young, brother of Jacob, was sent as a missionary, and at the end of one year he reported sixty-seven members.

The first Methodist preacher in Michigan was Freeman, a local preacher who began in 1803, wandering far into the interior, and also preaching in Detroit. Nathan Bangs, entering from Canada, preached in that city in 1804, though without visible success. Subsequently William Case crossed from Canada and delivered sermons; and a short time afterward William Mitchell, a local Methodist preacher, organized the first Methodist society in Detroit, which was also the first in the State.<sup>2</sup>

Tennessee, where Methodism was prospering, became

<sup>1</sup> "One Hundred Years of the A. M. E. Zion Church," by Bishop J. W. Hood (A. M. E. Zion Book Concern).

<sup>2</sup> Pilcher's "History of Methodism in Michigan."

the headquarters of the itinerant preachers who were exploring the southeastern portions of the country. In 1805 Asbury dispatched Elisha W. Bowman as a missionary from the Western Conference to introduce Methodism among the English settlements of the Territory of Louisiana. He formed a circuit, which was attached to another styled the South Mississippi, and together with it formed the Mississippi district, which appears first in the minutes of 1806. Few of the settlers were Americans, and these were generally so ignorant that Bowman reported that they knew little more about the need of salvation than the Indians. Some, after he had preached, asked him what he meant by "the fall of man," and when it was that he fell. Bowman was obliged to teach them to sing, and in fact "to do everything that is like worshiping God"; and he remarks that if they came to hear him once they thought they had done him a great favor.<sup>1</sup>

James Russell was admitted to the South Carolina Conference in 1805. On account of ignorance he had been refused a license to exhort, but the authorities were unable to maintain their attitude, for no man so eloquent had appeared among them; he was licensed by the South Carolina Conference before he could read, and carried his spelling-book with him around the circuit, seeking assistance in its lessons even from the children of the families with whom he lodged. So soon as he had acquired the art of reading he advanced in self-culture with a rapidity commensurate with his oratorical ability, and became noted as an English scholar and a man of refined taste. In Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit" interesting references are made to him by Bishop Wightman, who represents him as one of the founders of the Southern Methodist Church, famous in three States

<sup>1</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. iv., pp. 399-402.

as among the most eloquent and powerful preachers of his time.

Bishop Whatcoat died in Dover, Del., on the 5th of July, 1806, at the residence of Richard Bassett, Asbury being then *en route* to visit his colleague, and within one hundred and thirty miles of the place. Asbury speaks of him as "that father in Israel, my faithful friend for forty years, a man of solid parts, a self-denying man of God, who had been sixteen years in the ministry in England, Wales, and Ireland, and twenty-two in America; twelve as presiding elder, during four of which years he was stationed in cities or traveling with me; and six years in the superintendency." "A man," said he, "so uniformly good I have not known in Europe or America."

Lee notes certain peculiarities not specified by Bishop Asbury: "He seldom complained of any difficulties with which he met; he was especially clear and plain in his explanations of the Scriptures, with which he was particularly acquainted." He was "among the best of men for meekness and patience, humility and sobriety; for watchfulness over his words, and for a smooth and even temper; and, withal, for gifts and animation in preaching, especially in the last part of his life. . . . In his death the preachers have lost a pattern of piety, and the people have lost an able teacher."

Methodism was introduced into the new Territory of Missouri, considered a part of Louisiana, in 1807. Most of the early settlers were Roman Catholics; but the tide of migration was strongly setting in that direction, and already there were sixteen thousand inhabitants, one fifth of whom were slaves. The Rev. John Travis, who outlined and traversed the new circuit, owing to the scattered condition of the settlers, the badness of the roads, the swampy character of the lands near the Mississippi,

met with many difficulties, but at the end of the year reported fifty-six members.

Throughout this year general revivals took place in Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and Georgia, and one of special interest occurred in the city of New York. The record of the year showed an increase of 14,020 members and 64 preachers, giving a total of 144,590 members and 516 preachers. There was an increase of 2606 members of African descent, making nearly 30,000, notwithstanding disaffection among that people in certain sections.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### INTRODUCTION OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

WHEN the General Conference of 1808 assembled in Baltimore on the first day of May Asbury was the only bishop present, Whatcoat having died, and Coke being in Europe. There were thirty-two members from the Philadelphia Conference, among them Thomas Ware and Henry Boehm (who survived until the present generation, becoming by his writings and by his public and private verbal communications a valuable contributor to the history of American Methodism); thirty-one from the Baltimore, among them Stephen G. Roszel, Enoch George, Asa Shinn, and Robert R. Roberts; nineteen from the New York, including three whose names appear frequently in the history of Methodism—Garrettson, Cooper, and Bangs; eighteen from the Virginia, the most widely known being Philip Bruce and Jesse Lee; eleven from the South Carolina, among whom were William Phœbus, Lewis Myers, and John Gamewell; eleven from the Western, led by William McKendree; and seven from the New England, all of whom were already influential, and two, Joshua Soule and Elijah Hedding, conspicuous.

The relations of Coke to American Methodism, which, although on the whole of great service, had always been an occasion of discussion, had now become so delicate that their final settlement was imperatively demanded.

After his return to Europe he married, but sent over a proposal to take up his permanent residence in America, on condition that the continent should be divided as nearly equally as possible between him and Asbury as superintending bishops. This proposition was not acceptable. On the 16th of November he addressed a letter to the General Conference, in which he said that if they declared that his residence with them would assist to preserve their union, and if they agreed that he should have a full right in the General and Annual Conferences to give his judgment on the making of laws, stationing of preachers, sending out of missionaries, and everything else which as a bishop or superintendent belonged to his office, he would settle his affairs and come to the United States for life. And he added, "You may observe, I do not desire any *decisive* power. I want no new condition."

This business was settled by a resolution of thanks to Coke, one consenting that he might continue in Europe "until called to the United States by the General Conference, or by all the American conferences respectively"; and another that his name be retained in the minutes after the names of the bishops, with a footnote stating that, "at the request of the British Conference and by consent of this General Conference, he resides in Europe, but is not to exercise the office of superintendent among us until he be recalled as above stated."

Important as was the settlement of this question, another connected with Coke created much more excitement. A remarkable disclosure had been made by the publication of a letter sent by Coke to Bishop White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, suggesting the union of the Methodists with that body. It was written April 24, 1791. White replied, and certain interviews were held. The bishop kept the correspondence confidential until 1804, when he

revealed it to Simon Wilmer, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and John McClaskey, a member of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At a later period White gave a copy of Coke's letter to the Rev. Dr. Kemp, of Maryland, and in a pending diocesan controversy it was published.

Prejudice against Coke was increased by the charge that he initiated this correspondence without consulting Asbury. Much correspondence had been had between Coke and American Methodists in the interval between the publication of his negotiations with White and the assembling of this General Conference. To justify himself he addressed a long letter to the conference. In it he explains that at the time he wrote there were no regular General Conferences, and claims that he proposed the establishment of such bodies; that in the latter end of 1792 he "proposed and obtained that great blessing to the American connection, permanency for General Conferences, to be held at stated times"; that at the time he wrote his letter to White he feared lest the connection would lack stability; that he differed from Bishop Asbury in the matter of the Council, which had come to so disastrous an end; and that he did believe that "under God the connection would be more likely to be saved from convulsions by a union with the old Episcopal Church than in any other way—not by a dereliction of ordination, sacraments, and the Methodist discipline, but by a junction on proper terms." He maintains that he had provided "in the fullest manner, in the indispensably necessary conditions" which he laid down, "for the security and independence of Methodist discipline and places of worship." He states that he did not consult Asbury before he took these steps because he was in the South and inaccessible; that he did not intend to do more than begin a negotiation; and that on the 16th of the following May he



did lay the matter before Asbury at New Castle, Del., from which place he embarked for England, and that Asbury, "with that caution which peculiarly characterizes him, gave no decisive opinion on the subject."

In some of the letters which had been sent to Coke an answer had been demanded to a very serious question: "If you did not think that the episcopal ordination of Mr. Asbury was valid, why did you ordain him? Was there not duplicity in this business?" To this he answered:

"(1) I never, since I could reason on those things, considered the doctrine of *the uninterrupted apostolic succession of bishops* as at all valid or true.

"(2) I am of our late venerable father Mr. Wesley's opinion that the order of bishops and presbyters is one and the same.

"(3) I believe that the episcopal form of church government is the best in the world when the episcopal power is under due regulations and responsibility.

"(4) I believe that it is well to follow the example of the primitive church, as exemplified in the Word of God, by setting apart persons for great ministerial purposes by the imposition of hands, but especially those who are appointed for offices of the first rank in the church.

"From all I have advanced, you may easily perceive, my dear brethren, that I do not consider the imposition of hands, on the one hand, as essentially necessary for any office in the church; nor do I, on the other hand, think that the repetition of the imposition of hands for the same office, when important circumstances require it, is at all improper.

"If it be granted that my plan of union with the old Episcopal Church was desirable (*which now, I think, was not so, though I most sincerely believed it to be so at that time*), then if the plan could not have been accomplished

without a repetition of the imposition of hands for the same office, I did believe, and do now believe, and have no doubt, that the repetition of the imposition of hands would have been perfectly justifiable for the enlargement of the field of action, etc., and would not by any means have invalidated the former consecration or imposition of hands. Therefore I have no doubt but my consecration of Bishop Asbury was perfectly valid, and would have been so even if he had been reconsecrated. I never did apply to the General Convention or any other convention for reconsecration. I never intended that either Bishop Asbury or myself should give up our episcopal office if the junction were to take place; but I should have had no scruple then, nor should I now, *if the junction were desirable*, to have submitted to, or to submit to, a reimposition of hands in order to accomplish a great object; but I do say again, I do *not* now believe such a junction desirable."<sup>1</sup>

As the letter to White was accessible, and several members of the General Conference were well acquainted with the latter, the subject was thoroughly investigated. At the conclusion of the discussion the conference addressed a long letter to Coke, the substance and spirit of which are in the following extract:

"Your two letters [the first related to his official relation to the body] were respectfully received, and had a salutary effect upon our minds. The reasons which you have assigned for some former transactions, and the ingenuous candor which you have manifested in frankly acknowledging and declaring the motives and inducements that led you to those measures, together with your affectionate acknowledgment that in certain cases you were mistaken as to your views of some of the points in question; as likewise your manifest friendship and good will to this connection and your American brethren, and your evident

<sup>1</sup> Bangs's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. ii., pp. 210, 211.

solicitude to retain a place and standing among us—taking these circumstances collectively, they had a great influence upon some of our minds in removing certain suspicious fears which had been imbibed rather unfavorable to your standing among us.

“ You may be assured that we feel an affectionate regard for you, that we gratefully remember your repeated labors of love toward us, and that we sensibly feel our obligations for the services you have rendered us. We hope that no circumstance will ever alienate our Christian affection from you, or yours from us. We wish to maintain and to cultivate a good understanding and brotherly unity with you, and with all our European brethren. In full conference, of near one hundred and thirty members, we entered into a very long conversation, and very serious and solemn debate, upon sundry resolutions which were laid before us relative to your case.”

One of the most suggestive situations in ecclesiastical history grew out of this correspondence. Coke had mentioned two difficulties, and in White's reply he said, “ I can say of the one and the other that I do not think them insuperable, provided there be a conciliatory disposition on both sides.” And, what was still more significant as indicating Bishop White's spirit in this situation, “ It is rather to be expected that distinct churches, agreeing in fundamentals, should make mutual sacrifices for a union, than that any church should divide into two bodies without a difference being even alleged to exist in any leading point. For the preventing of this the measures which you propose cannot fail of success unless there be on one side, or on both, a most lamentable deficiency of Christian temper.”

In the General Convention of 1792 of the Protestant Episcopal Church, propositions for union passed the House

of Bishops, consisting of four persons—Seabury, White, Provoost, and Madison—but were thrown out in the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the United States, it is an established fact that such was the spirit of the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1791 that a union would have been easy; and subsequently several of the members of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies which threw out the proposal from the bishops stated had they fully understood the nature of the proposition it would have been approved.

Had such a union been formed it is certain that neither the Protestant Episcopal Church nor American Methodism would have been what it now is, and it is possible that something better than either might exist.

Nine years before the assembling of the General Conference of 1808, Coke sought to effect a virtual union between English Wesleyans and the Church of England, and addressed a letter to the Bishop of London, informing him that he wished to promote the "securing of the great body of Methodists in connection with the late Rev. John Wesley to the Church of England." He stated that they had nearly ninety thousand members, and six times as many regular hearers; that they were friends of the liturgy of the Church of England and its episcopacy; but that many of them had a deep prejudice against receiving the Lord's Supper from ministers who frequented card-tables, balls, horse-races, theaters, and other places of fashionable amusement; that he had tried in vain to show them that the validity of the ordinance does not depend upon the piety, or even the morality, of the ministers. He recounted the different controversies among the Wesleyans, and expressed

<sup>1</sup> Bishop White's "Memoirs," pp. 194-199. See footnote on "Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism," by T. B. Neely, p. 372.

his fear that they were deviating to such an extent from the Establishment that in time it would bring about a universal separation.

His scheme was to have a given number of the leading preachers, who should be selected for the purpose by the conference, ordained by the Church of England, and permitted to travel through the connection, administering the sacraments to the societies. He declared his conviction that the numerous societies in America would have been a regular Presbyterian Church had not Wesley and himself taken the steps which they judged it necessary to adopt. Avowing his love for the English church, and asserting that infidelity was moving with such gigantic strides that there ought to be a union of all who could conscientiously unite, he made known to the bishop that men of long standing and great influence in the connection approved the plan, but that these were mostly far advanced in years, informing him also that he had laid the whole plan before the attorney-general, who was a fellow-student of his at Oxford, and that the latter "greatly approved it."

Coke received from the Bishop of London a courteous acknowledgment of his communication, recognizing the importance of the subject, and stating: "The object you have in view is certainly very desirable; but how far the means you have proposed for attaining it are practicable I cannot at present pretend to judge." The bishop promised to converse upon the subject with the Archbishops of York and Canterbury. The latter wrote to Coke two weeks later, declining to ordain on the recommendation of the conference, and adds that he had conversed with a number of bishops, and all agreed with him that it would be highly improper, and appeals to Coke to "endeavor to bring the people to a better mind."

Coke's ordination by Wesley had not destroyed his standing as a presbyter in the Church of England. Some years after this, when he had set his heart upon the establishment of a mission in India, being informed that the government contemplated establishing a bishopric there, and finding the Wesleyans not as enthusiastic in the project as himself, he wrote to Lord Liverpool, offering himself as a candidate, promising if appointed "to return most fully into the bosom of the Established Church."

In estimating these proceedings it should be remembered that he lived in a period of bitter controversy on both sides of the Atlantic, and at the time of the secession of O'Kelly had reason for doubting the stability of American Methodism. After Wesley's death the fate of British Methodism was for a considerable time uncertain. It is probable that Coke hoped to succeed Wesley in England; but the English Conference would not brook the idea of the transmission of Wesley's unlimited power, and the Irish Conference, over which Coke had always presided by Wesley's appointment, declined to allow him the presidential chair. But the English Conference showed its esteem for him by making him its secretary, an office which he filled for a number of years.

He continued the most powerful factor in British foreign mission work, while he was technically bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and to him belongs more than to any other the honor of initiating the home mission work of British Methodism.

A discriminating biographer, William Morley Punshon, believes that his life proved that he was "covetous of the responsibility, the unremitting toil, and the untrammelled opportunities of doing good which the bishopric would bring him, rather than of the lawn, the miter, and the

palace—those post-apostolic appendages to the office which tend only to weight the wings of the ‘angels’ who have ‘the everlasting gospel to preach’ in their flight through ‘the midst of heaven’”; but justly observes that “he would have been a greater statesman if he had had fewer devices, and had cogitated longer on those which his brain conceived. He damaged his own reputation, and gave occasion for suspicion that he was actuated by meaner motives than the noble ones from which he habitually acted by hasty and injudicious proposals.”

The conference having decided that the superintendency needed strengthening, it was moved by Roszel that “one person be elected and ordained as joint superintendent or bishop with Asbury”; also by Ostrander, seconded by Soule, that “two be elected and ordained”; and by McClaskey, seconded by Cooper, that “*seven* be added to the superintendency.” The next morning leave to withdraw the motion for seven additional bishops was refused. It was then put to vote and lost; the motion for two additional bishops met the same fate. The original motion was then adopted, whereupon the conference proceeded to the election with one hundred and twenty-eight members present, of whom ninety-five voted for William McKendree, the other votes being divided between Cooper and Lee.

McKendree was famous throughout the West at this time. He was the son of a Virginia planter; at the age of twenty he entered the army of the Revolution, joined a company of volunteers, and became an adjutant, “displaying great energy in procuring supplies to sustain the allied armies of Washington and Count Rochambeau, and was at the battle of Yorktown, when Cornwallis was captured.”

He was baptized and trained in the old colonial church of Virginia, and lived blamelessly, but knew nothing of experimental religion. When the Methodists appeared in his neighborhood he was awakened, and joined the Society, but remained a member several years without obtaining the experience professed by others. Conscious of the inconsistency, he says, "I then peacefully retired from the Society, while my conduct continued to secure their friendship." He remained in this state until thirty years of age, when, under the preaching of the Rev. John Easter, he was fully awakened, and tortured with fears, which gave place to confidence and joy; when he became much concerned for the salvation of those who knew nothing of the gospel hope, although he never imagined that he would preach until his father inquired if the Lord had not called him thereto. He replied, "I cannot tell, for I do not know what being called to preach the gospel implies." Seized with a severe illness, he was visited by the minister under whose preaching he had been aroused, who prayed with singular fervor for his recovery, and that he might "be thrust into the ministry." After hesitation he applied for admission, and was received; in 1790 Asbury ordained him deacon, and the next year elder. Manifesting vigor, zeal, and sense, he was appointed to large circuits, one extending from Chesapeake Bay over the Blue Ridge and Alleghany Mountains, comprehending also a vast region of territory on the Western waters. He accompanied Asbury and Whatcoat to the Western Conference in 1800, and was appointed to a district embracing the present States of Ohio and Kentucky, and large sections of western Virginia, Illinois, Tennessee, and Mississippi, where he spent eight years, and participated in what has ever since been called "the great revival in Kentucky and Tennessee."



An issue arose as to the exclusive employment as ministers of men who had received a "liberal education." On this the Presbyterians divided, and a new denomination called "Cumberland" Presbyterians originated in Cumberland County, Tennessee. About the same time the Shakers appeared, and led off some of the Presbyterian ministers into their delusions. "Stoneites," "New Lights," and other half-insane sects were developed. Summers and Paine give interesting details, showing that McKendree was the man for the occasion. He guided the Methodists through their embarrassments without entangling alliances and with comparatively little defection.

Coke was in Europe, and neither Asbury nor Whatcoat could reach the Western Conference for the session of 1804. McKendree presided, and exhibited such ability that after the death of Bishop Whatcoat his name was frequently mentioned for the superintendency. Tradition, however, says that while his abilities, particularly as exhibited in the West, prepared the way, the exciting cause of his election to the episcopacy was a discourse which he delivered on the Sunday before the conference opened. His text was: "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer. viii. 21, 22). The introduction seemed tame, his sentences disjointed, and his elocution defective. He explained the condition of the human family, and proceeded to analyze the feelings which such a state of things awakened in the souls of God's faithful ambassadors. "But when he came to speak of the blessed effects upon the heart of the balm which God had prepared for the healing of the nations, he carried the whole congregation away with him."<sup>1</sup> At this time he

was fifty-one years of age, was the first native American elected to the office of bishop, and was ordained by Asbury, assisted by Garrettson, Bruce, Lee, and Ware.

Next to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, the introduction of representative government was the most vital change in American Methodism, and remains unparalleled in meaning and influence.

Jesse Lee placed in the hands of Asbury on the 7th of July, 1791, "a paper proposing the election of not less than two nor more than four preachers from each conference, to form the General Conference in Baltimore in December, 1792, to be continued annually."<sup>1</sup>

In the General Conference of 1800 James Tolleson moved that "WHEREAS, Much time has been lost, and will always be lost, in the event of a General Conference being continued; and WHEREAS, The circuits are left without preachers for one, two, or three months, and other great inconveniences attend so many of the preachers leaving their work, and no real advantage arises therefrom; *Resolved*, That instead of a General Conference we substitute a delegated one."

Tolleson, who possessed high qualities, died of yellow fever a few weeks after the conference adjourned; his memoir in the minutes for 1801 records that as a traveling preacher he labored between eight and nine years, "during which time he filled several important stations with dignity and diligence. He possessed promising abilities both in gifts and understanding; but, what is of infinitely more importance, he was a man of piety and uniform in his religious deportment."

Although Tolleson's admirably worded resolution was promptly negatived, it soon began to be generally felt that to deposit all power in the entire traveling ministry was

<sup>1</sup> "Asbury's Journal," vol. ii., p. 128.

not wise, neither affording a sufficient guaranty of the unity of the church nor of the security of its government and doctrine. The conferences nearest to the place of meeting always had a much larger representation than those at a greater distance, while the cost to the latter in time, money, and hardship was almost unendurable.

The health of Whatcoat having become impaired, a paper was submitted by Asbury to the Annual Conferences in 1806, beginning with the Baltimore, in favor of calling a General Conference for the purpose of strengthening the episcopacy. It was proposed that it should meet in the city of Baltimore, May, 1807, consist of seven delegates from each Annual Conference, and have authority to elect one bishop or more, and also to provide for a future delegated General Conference, whose powers should be defined and limited by "constitutional restrictions."<sup>1</sup>

This was passed unanimously by the New York Conference, attested and signed by Garrettson, Cooper, and Samuel Coate, and recommended to the other six conferences. The New England concurred by a vote of twenty-eight to fifteen, the Western unanimously, and the South Carolina with her two negative votes. These conferences chose delegates.

Lee says<sup>2</sup> that "the Virginia Conference at New-Berne, in February, 1807, refused to take it under consideration, and rejected it as being pointedly in opposition to all the rules of the church. The bishop labored hard to carry the point, but he labored in vain; and the whole business of that dangerous plan was upset by the Virginia Conference. The inventors and defenders of that project might have meant well; but they certainly erred in judgment."

On the ninth day of the General Conference of 1808 a

<sup>1</sup> Bangs, vol. ii., p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> "History of the Methodists," p. 345.

memorial was presented from the New York Conference, showing that the Methodist Episcopal Church was composed of about five hundred traveling and two thousand local preachers, ministering to about one hundred and forty thousand members, "implying congregations who are directly or remotely under the pastoral oversight and ministerial charge amounting in all probability to more than one million of souls." This was preparatory to the consideration of the inconvenience, expense, and loss of time that necessarily resulted from the existing regulations relative to the General Conference. The New York Conference declared its thorough conviction that "a representative or delegated General Conference, composed of a specific number on principles of equal representation from the several Annual Conferences, would be much more conducive to the prosperity and general unity of the whole body than the present indefinite and anomalous body of ministers called together unequally from the various conferences, to the great inconvenience of the ministry and injury of the work of God."

It had been adopted by the New York Conference without a dissenting vote. The New England had unanimously voted to concur, as had the Western, and the South Carolina with the exception of five members.

Asbury called for "the mind of the conference," as to whether any further regulation in the order of the General Conference was necessary. The question was determined in the affirmative.

A committee was formed, by the election of two from each conference, to draw up such regulations as they might consider best, and report to the conference. It was called the "Committee Relative to Regulating and Perpetuating the General Conference."

The members elected were: from the New York Con-

ference, Ezekiel Cooper and John Wilson; from the New England, George Pickering and Joshua Soule; from the Western, William McKendree and William Burke; from the South Carolina, Joshua Randall and William Phœbus; from the Virginia, Philip Bruce and Jesse Lee; from the Baltimore, Stephen G. Roszel and Nelson Reed; and from the Philadelphia, John McClaskey and Thomas Ware.

They appointed a subcommittee, consisting of Cooper, Soule, and Bruce, to draft a report, to be submitted for approval or modification. It was agreed that each should prepare a paper stating his view of the restrictions necessary, to be presented at a subsequent meeting. Cooper and Soule complied, but Bruce had committed nothing to writing. On comparing the two papers, Bruce fell in with the main points of the one presented by Soule, to which Cooper finally agreed.

At the meeting of the whole committee, which had both plans before them, after some slight changes suggested by the others that of Soule was adopted.<sup>1</sup>

Their report, which was presented May 16th, elicited much debate, which was suspended for the consideration of the following motion made by Cooper "as preparatory to the minds of the brethren to determine on the subject of the said committee's report":

"*Resolved*, That in the fifth section of the Discipline, after the question, 'By whom shall the presiding elders be chosen?' the answer shall be: '*Ans.* Each Annual Conference respectively, without debate, shall annually choose by ballot its own presiding elders.'"

Debate on this resolution consumed part of Monday afternoon and the greater part of Tuesday and Wednesday. Three times it was moved to close, once to postpone the subject indefinitely, and once until August 15th.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Elliot's "Life of Bishop Roberts."

At last a motion to close was carried. On motion of Garrettson it was ordered that the vote be taken by ballot. This being done, the result showed that the resolution was defeated, there being fifty-two yeas and seventy-three nays.

Though Lee had been the first to propose a delegated General Conference, he contended against the entire plan. His principal argument was based upon a doctrine of conference rights. After long discussion, perceiving that the report might be adopted, he moved that the delegates should be sent by seniority instead of by election.

When upon the first resolution the vote was taken by ballot, there were fifty-seven yeas and sixty-four nays. It was soon suspected and finally known that the measure was defeated principally by the votes of the Philadelphia and Baltimore conferences. Asbury was greatly disappointed. The New England delegates prepared to return home, the Western were equally displeased, and many of the members determined to withdraw. Hedding states that all from New England except himself were making arrangements to do so. Paine, in his "Life of McKendree," says that six members from New England and two from the West were going home, but that Asbury and McKendree, aided by Hedding, prevailed upon them to wait for a day.

By all these "fathers" it was considered a crisis in the career of the denomination, and it was ever after the belief of Hedding that had these brethren departed it would have been the last General Conference held.

From Wednesday until the following Monday the excitement continued. The order of events on the latter day was as follows: It was moved and carried that the motion to fix the time and place of the next General

Conference lie over until it was determined who should compose it. This strategic motion was made by Leonard Cassel and seconded by Stephen G. Roszel, and, it having prevailed, Enoch George moved, seconded by Roszel, that "the General Conference shall be composed of one member for every five members of each Annual Conference." Soule then moved, seconded by Pickering, that "each Annual Conference shall have the power of sending their proportionate number of members to the General Conference either by seniority or choice, as they shall think best."

Leroy M. Lee<sup>1</sup> states that this motion placed Lee between his two doctrines, the independent rights of the conferences and the condition of seniority, neutralizing his opposition. Immediately after this it was decided that the next General Conference should be held in New York, May 1, 1812. Lee, being now conciliated, seconded the motion of Roszel that "two thirds of the representatives of all the Annual Conferences should be necessary for a quorum in the General Conference."

On Tuesday, May 24th, Lee moved, seconded by Burke, that the General Conference "shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to destroy episcopacy, or to destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." Cooper's proposal to cover this point was, "they shall not take away episcopacy or reduce our ministry to a presbyterial parity."

It was then moved by Roszel, and seconded by Pickering, that "one of the superintendents preside in the General Conference; but, in case of the absence of the superintendent, the conference shall elect a president *pro tem*." Next it was moved by Roszel, and seconded by Nelson Reed, that "the General Conference shall have full powers to

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Jesse Lee," pp. 442, 443.

make rules and regulations for our church under the following restrictions:

“The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

“They shall not allow of more than one representative for every five members of an Annual Conference, nor allow of a less number than one for every seven.”

At this point it was moved to appoint a committee of three to modify certain exceptionable expressions in the General Rules. This was lost, and the third rule, as moved by Roszel, “They shall not revoke or change the ‘General Rules of the United Societies,’” was then passed. The next, as follows, was carried:

“They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the Society, or by a committee, and of an appeal.”

And afterward the following: “They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern or of the Charter Fund to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children,” concluding with this provision for alteration of the restrictions:

“*Provided*, nevertheless, that, upon the joint recommendation of all the Annual Conferences, then a majority of two thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions.”

The same afternoon it was moved by Ostrander, and seconded by Cooper, that “the general superintendent, with or by the advice of all the Annual Conferences respectively, shall have power to call a General Conference



if they judge it necessary at any time." On motion of Asbury the following was passed: "That the General Conference shall meet on the first day of May once in four years perpetually, and at such place or places as shall be fixed on by the General Conference from time to time."

Thus by a happy union of the contending forces representative government was introduced under a constitution which guaranteed the doctrines, essential features of the discipline, the rights, privileges, and duties of ministers and members, and, so far as laws could contribute to it, the preservation of the spirit of primitive Methodism, which is the spirit of original Christianity.

The conference by resolutions consented to the appointment of a person to raise a subscription in any part of the connection to assist in defraying "the enormous debt on the new church in Boston." It made a draft of five hundred dollars on the Book Fund to pay the expenses of the more needy preachers back to their circuits; gave Cooper a thousand dollars as extra compensation as book-steward for the first five years; employed J. Wilson as editor and book-steward at a yearly salary of seven hundred and fifty dollars, and Daniel Hitt as assistant editor and book-steward, at six hundred dollars. It resolved that no traveling preacher should publish any book or pamphlet without the approbation of the Annual Conference to which he belonged, or of a committee chosen by them; and substituted the word "allowance" for "salary" wherever it occurred in the Discipline.

On motion of Asbury it passed the following portentous resolution:

"That there be one thousand Forms of Discipline prepared for the use of the South Carolina Conference, in which the section and rule on slavery be left out."

The fact that Bangs does not refer to this subject has

been noticed by several writers. Just before this a motion to strike out the whole section in the Discipline respecting slavery was lost, and just after it Roszel moved, seconded by Ware, that the first two paragraphs of the section on slavery be retained in the Discipline, and that the General Conference authorize each Annual Conference to frame its own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves.

It has been said by a writer that such measures tempt us to blush at every aspect in which they present the legislative acumen of our fathers. Should it not be rather said that they show to what lengths legislators of benevolent minds may go to promote peace, and emphasize the oft-repeated teaching of God's Word that peace may be purchased at a price too dear?

As Lee represented the opposition at the General Conference of 1808, and as his "History of the Methodists" was copyrighted in December of that year, his testimony as to the reception of the work of that body, and as to the necessity of establishing representation, is valuable:

"Our connection having spread very extensively, and the number of our preachers being much larger than formerly, it was thought best to make some new regulations about our General Conference in future, and the foregoing regulations were agreed to, by which means each part of the connection would have a proportionable number of preachers in the General Conference. The Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences will no longer include more than half the members of the General Conference. . . . There was a good deal of peace and union among the preachers at that General Conference, and there were one hundred and thirty traveling preachers who were members of that conference. Mr. McKendree had been a traveling preacher just twenty years when he was ordained a bishop. Most

of the preachers returned from that conference well satisfied with what was done while we were together."

The religious influence of this conference was as valuable to the denomination as was its work in legislation. On Sunday, the 8th, Pickering preached in the market-house, and three preachers exhorted afterward; later McKendree preached his great sermon; in the afternoon Mead preached at Oldtown, while Asbury preached the opening sermon of a new chapel. Three times a day there was preaching in one of the churches, and every evening in the four others, all these services resulting in conversions. On the following Sunday, McKendree preached at 7 A.M., Asbury at ten, Gruber in German at three o'clock in Otterbein's church, McKendree at five, and McClaskey in the evening. On the last Sunday of the conference Pickering preached at six, Coate at seven, Gruber at three to the colored people, Cooper at five, and Lee in the evening. Henry Boehm, who gives these particulars, says that there was a great deal more preaching—that he has simply named the men he heard.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical, of Sixty-four Years in the Ministry," by Henry Boehm, edited by J. B. Wakeley (New York, 1865).

## CHAPTER XIV.

### EVOLUTION UNDER A CONSTITUTION.

CLOSE attention to detail was necessary so long as the Methodist Episcopal Church was governed by assemblies with power to repeal any act of their predecessors, and even, by a vote of a majority, disband the church, or transform it into something wholly unlike itself. Hereafter must chiefly be noted salient steps in the march of an army thoroughly drilled and ever ready for the charge.

Early in 1811, after various disputes between England and this country, there was an encounter between an American and an English vessel, and an American court of inquiry decided that the first shot was fired by the English, which gave rise to an apprehension of serious complications with Great Britain. This resulted in an extended discussion, and an increase of the army by the addition of twenty-five thousand men. The agitation was not favorable to the spread of Methodism, but considerable attention was given to the erection of churches.

The General Conference of 1812 met in the city of New York, with fifteen delegates from the Baltimore Conference, fourteen from the Philadelphia, thirteen from the New York, and the same number from the Western, eleven from the Virginia, nine each from the New England and the South Carolina, and six from the Genesee.

A question arose respecting some of the delegates from

New England. Three reserves had been elected to "succeed and take the place in case of the failure of any of the first chosen delegates." By a vote of fifty-six against twenty-two, it was decided that they should be seated.

The conference decided by a majority of nearly two thirds that it had power to resolve itself into a committee of the whole.

McKendree presented his views in writing, an act without precedent. Asbury immediately arose, and in substance thus addressed him: "I have something to say to you before the conference." McKendree rose, and they stood face to face. Then said Asbury, "This is a new thing. I never did business in this way, and why is this new thing introduced?" McKendree replied, "You are our father; we are your sons. You never have had need of it. I am only a brother, and have need of it."

The various parts of this address were referred to special committees, the one on the episcopacy being elected by ballot.

Lee moved that "the members of the next General Conference go by seniority, and that the supernumerary and superannuated preachers shall not be included among the senior preachers; also that one for every six members shall go to the next General Conference, and in case there are two or more preachers of equal standing, then the first-named shall have the preference, and should any of the above-named preachers fail by sickness or otherwise to attend the General Conference, then the next senior preacher shall go in his place."

This was an important series of motions, and raised the question at once of the powers of the delegated conference under the rules formed "for the perpetuation and regulation of General Conferences" by that of 1808. The first

proposition also involved the question upon which Lee had been outgeneraled in the preceding conference. On Friday, the questions being divided, both motions were lost.

James Axley, a member from the Western Conference, moved that "no stationed or local preacher shall retail spirituous or malt liquors without forfeiting his ministerial character among us." This motion was defeated; but in the pastoral address was inserted: "It is with regret that we have seen the use of ardent spirits, dram-drinking, and so forth, so common among the Methodists. We have endeavored to suppress the practice by our example, but it is necessary that we add precept to example; and we really think it not consistent with the character of a Christian to be immersed in the practice of distilling or retailing an article so destructive to the morals of society, and we do most earnestly recommend the Annual Conferences and our people to join with us in making a firm and constant stand against an evil which has ruined thousands both in time and eternity."

This shows that those who have inferred that the conference was in sympathy with the use of spirituous or malt liquors because it declined to pass the motion made by Axley are not warranted in the conclusion. Since the practice had grown up gradually, it was deemed by the majority improper to pass a rule at that time.

John Sale moved a resolution to prevent the preachers and private members from buying or holding lottery tickets, or having anything to do with them; but the conference was divided in sentiment upon the subject, and the motion was postponed until May 1, 1816. Lotteries were then considered a proper method of raising money for churches.

The most important debate was upon a proposition to

legalize the election of presiding elders by the Annual Conferences—a subject which had been an occasion of controversy at almost every General Conference. Laban Clark, of New England, offered a resolution in favor of it, to which Nicholas Snethen moved an amendment “that the bishops shall have power to nominate presiding elders, and if the first nomination is not ratified by a majority of the Annual Conference, the bishop shall proceed to nominate until a choice is made; and in all cases each nomination shall be determined separately by ballot, without debate.” While this was pending, it was moved that the subject lie on the table until the bishops gave their opinion. This was lost by a vote of forty-one for and forty-two against. On the decision of the question, eighty-two votes were cast, of which thirty-nine were in favor and forty-three against the election of presiding elders. The delegates of the Philadelphia, New York, and Genesee conferences, thirty-three in number, were sent under instructions to vote for it, and they did so; which shows that four fifths of the other five conferences were against it. Among the advocates were Ware, Garrettson, Cooper, Lee, Asa Shinn, and Nicholas Snethen.<sup>1</sup>

To McKendree is due the cabinet, so called. Asbury would never permit the presiding elders to counsel him in stationing preachers. He knew them all, and declared that he did not wish his judgment confused by the prejudices and prepossessions of others; for he had “no ends to gain”; some of them might have. Asbury, without success, urged McKendree to pursue the same course. The original plan of these two bishops was to attend the conferences together, as Asbury and Coke had done, and, more recently, Asbury and Whatcoat.

Many of the influential members of the conference were

<sup>1</sup> “General Conference Journals,” vol. i., p. 115.

convinced of the necessity of a denominational periodical. The "Methodist Magazine" was started in 1789, but suspended the year following. For reasons not fully understood at the present day, so many were opposed to it that a vote directing the agents to resume the publication of the magazine passed by a bare majority.

It was decided by ballot to hold the next General Conference in Baltimore. Early the next month Congress passed a bill, which was signed by the President, declaring war with Great Britain. During three years the war was waged on land and sea with varying fortunes, until the last battle, which took place at New Orleans on the 8th of January, 1815. The effect of this conflict on the relations between the Canadas and the United States was exceedingly unhappy. Bangs, appointed presiding elder in the lower province, was to have charge also of Montreal, but by the consent of the bishops gave up his journey when he had reached Lansingburg, N. Y., and remained in the United States; and only one preacher, Thomas Burch, who volunteered for Canada, succeeded in reaching it. The ministers in Upper Canada belonged to the Genesee Conference, but were unable to attend its session, as all friendly intercourse between the two countries was suspended.

A sect known as Reformed Methodists arose in 1813, led by Pliny Brett, who was refused admittance into full connection in the New England Conference. This party claimed peculiar attainments in holiness, and was the means of destroying one or two large and several small societies, particularly on Cape Cod and in Vermont.

Under the auspices of the British Wesleyan connection, Dr. Coke, accompanied by six missionaries, embarked on the 10th of December, 1813 for Ceylon. On the morning of the 5th of May, 1814, he was discovered lifeless in his cabin, and it was the opinion of the ship's surgeon that



death was occasioned by a stroke of apoplexy, "to which, from the make of his body and the nature of his constitution, he appeared to have been somewhat predisposed."<sup>1</sup>

One of the missionaries, in the presence of the soldiers, the crew, and the passengers, read the burial service over the body of this man, venerable with age, learning, and services to the Christian church; and, as the sun was sinking, "the casket and its precious contents were cast into the Indian Ocean, to await the fulfillment of the promise, 'the sea shall give up its dead.'"

Memorial sermons were preached in the principal Methodist churches and chapels of the world. Wherever Asbury went he delivered such to the conferences, pronouncing Coke a man "of blessed mind and will; of the third branch of Oxonian Methodists; a gentleman, a scholar, and a bishop to us; and, as a minister of Christ, in zeal, in labors, and in services the greatest man in the last century." This eulogium is merited; but had he spoken in such exalted terms of his judgment, it would have been an exaggeration.

As the war continued Methodism in Canada suffered exceedingly. The circuits in Upper Canada were manned, but those in Montreal, St. Francis, and Ottawa were without regular supplies. The church in Quebec had no regular pastor for two years of the struggle, but a Methodist surgeon in a British regiment preached there efficiently, and when his regiment was removed a local preacher was developed.

When peace was declared the membership in Canada had been reduced to little more than half the number at the beginning of hostilities. The Genesee Conference resumed care of the country. William Case was made presiding elder of the Upper Canada district, and Henry

<sup>1</sup> Drew's "Life of Coke."

Ryan of the Lower Canada. The British Conference, however, sent over three missionaries for Montreal and Quebec.

The increase in 1813 was 18,950 in members, but the following year exhibited a decrease of 3178; the number of traveling preachers was decreased by one. The increase of members in 1815 was but 36, and of preachers 17; justifying Wesley's aphorism that "war is always a foe to true religion."

Asbury left Albany, N. Y., on the 27th of May, 1815, to attend the New England Conference, reaching Boston eleven days later greatly exhausted, so that during the session he was confined to his room. By great effort he was able to ordain twelve deacons and twelve elders, but resigned the presidential chair to George Pickering. With indomitable courage he had planned a tour of sixteen hundred miles, but weakness compelled him to reduce it "to a straight ride of three hundred and eighty miles to New York."

This led him through Ashgrove, where he preached in the chapel. He regarded his visit with the greatest interest, for the society had been formed by Philip Embury, who had removed from New York in 1769, and for six years had been chaplain and class-leader of the few pious souls who formed the settlement. Injured while mowing in his field, he had died in 1775, and Asbury always spoke tenderly of that little society.

After preaching in New York he went to Wilmington, where he found Judge Bassett helpless from a second stroke of paralysis. Thence he traveled to Ohio, and, although ill, presided at the Ohio Conference. McKendree met him here, and accompanied him to Cincinnati. Later he attended the Tennessee Conference and preached on the death of Coke, recording in his "Journal" these

pathetic words: "My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop McKendree. *I will take away my feet.* It is the fifty-fifth year of ministry, and forty-fifth year of labor in America. My mind enjoys great peace and divine consolation."

This was the last conference he attended, and in December he made the last entry in his "Journal." His doubts and fears were gone, and he wrote: "My consolations are great. I live in God from moment to moment."

On the 24th of March, hoping to attend the General Conference, which was to meet in Baltimore, he started northward, reaching Richmond, Va. There he preached his last sermon. Not being strong enough to walk, even with the support of his friends, he was carried into the church in their arms. His text was, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

Accompanied by the Rev. John Wesley Bond, he journeyed until the 29th of March, when he reached the house of Mr. Arnold in Spottsylvania, eighteen miles from Fredericksburg; and there on Sunday, March 31, 1816, he died, testifying by expressive gestures to his love, hope, and peace, when he could no longer speak.<sup>1</sup>

Can his career be paralleled? "In his American ministry alone he preached sixteen thousand five hundred sermons, ordained more than four thousand preachers, traveled on horseback or in carriages two hundred and seventy thousand miles." Well does Stevens say that, with "Wesley, Whitefield, and Coke, he ranks as one of the four greatest representative men of the Methodist movement." So fine was his discrimination that his estimate of men was almost infallible, and such his self-restraint that one could

<sup>1</sup> "Bishop Asbury: A Biographical Study for Christian Workers," by the Rev. F. W. Briggs, M.A. (Wesleyan Conference Office, London, England).

never discern his thoughts before he was disposed to disclose them.

Contentions between the white and the colored Methodists of Philadelphia increased to such an extent that John Emory issued a circular letter to the colored people of Bethel Church stating that the white preachers could no longer maintain pastoral responsibility over them. On account of this "they considered themselves disowned by the Methodists." A meeting-house was fitted up not far from Bethel, and an invitation given to all colored people who desired to be Methodists to attend there. But this plan not succeeding, in 1814 Robert R. Roberts, an elder and pastor of St. George's Church, insisted upon preaching to and taking pastoral charge of them, claiming the right to do so under a contract made between the members of Bethel Church and the Methodists at the time Asbury ordained Allen a deacon. Being advised that he ought to make terms with the trustees, he replied that "he did not come to consult with Richard Allen or the trustees, but to notify the congregation that on the next Sabbath he would be present and take charge." He was informed that he could not be allowed to preach; nevertheless at the appointed time he came. The trustees, having taken legal counsel, had placed their own preacher in the pulpit, and so disposed the congregation that it was impossible for Roberts to reach it, and after some debate he departed.

The next year his successor, Robert Burch, pursued a similar course with a like result, in consequence of which he applied to the Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus. The application was decided in favor of Bethel Church.

The colored people of that society and those of their own race who sympathized with them organized them-

selves in 1816 into an independent body, adopting as their standards the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, with very few modifications, its Form of Discipline. They held their first General Conference in April, 1816, and Richard Allen, previously ordained an elder, was elected to the office of bishop, and was consecrated by prayer and the imposition of the hands of five colored local elders, one of whom, Absalom Jones, was a priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Thus arose the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Peter Spencer, a colored man in Wilmington, Del., had been set apart in 1813 by election, and the laying on of hands of three lay elders who were chosen to that office for a special purpose, thus becoming the germ of the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church.

News of the establishment of these denominations stirred up considerable uneasiness among the colored congregations of the Methodist Episcopal Church in different parts of the country, especially in New York. The colored Methodists of that city had applied for the ordination as elders of some of their local preachers, but the Methodist Episcopal Church meted out to them in substance the same treatment which the early Methodists had received from the English church, a kind of Fabian policy of inactivity. The aggressiveness of Peter Spencer and Allen, especially of the latter, compelled the Zion people in New York to renew their efforts to obtain ordination by the bishops.<sup>1</sup>

In rebuilding John Street Church, in 1817, the trustees and other members became involved in controversy, and the contest growing bitter, William M. Stillwell, a traveling preacher, three trustees, and three hundred members

<sup>1</sup> "One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church," by Bishop J. W. Hood (A. M. E. Zion Book Concern, New York City), p. 62.

of the society seceded. Various local preachers and members affiliated with them, and the sect became known as Stillwellites. For a time it increased rapidly; but soon it was seen that it had no distinctive principles and could supply no demand; and most of the seceders returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church "convinced that it is easier to destroy a good church than to make a better one."<sup>1</sup> Those who did not return renounced the itinerancy, and formed a Congregational church, of which Stillwell was pastor. In a few years, however, it utterly disappeared.

The minister who was last appointed from the New York Conference to Zion Colored Church in New York was among the seceders. He was allowed to finish his year, not as an appointee of the bishop, but as called by the church. They availed themselves of the help of Dr. James Covell, Sylvester Hutchinson, and William M. Stillwell, who set apart Abraham Thompson, James Varick, and Leven Smith as elders, they having been previously ordained deacons. Thus originated the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

The General Conference of 1816 met on the first day of May, and consisted of sixteen delegates from the New York Conference, fourteen each from the South Carolina, the Baltimore, and the Philadelphia, twelve from the New England, ten each from the Genesee and the Virginia, nine from the Ohio, and six from the Tennessee. Asbury had prepared an address, which was solemnly read to the conference by the secretary, as was one from McKendree. Besides this communication Bishop Asbury, August 5, 1813, prepared a remarkable valedictory epistle "to William McKendree, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Enoch George and Robert Richford Roberts were elected

<sup>1</sup> Porter's "History of Methodism," p. 337.

bishops on the 14th of May, the former having fifty-seven and the latter fifty-five votes. George was a native of Virginia, trained in a family where religion was merely a form, notwithstanding it was within the parish of Devereaux Jarrott, that "Methodist before Methodism." On removing to another part of the State the family became acquainted with Methodism. The first preacher whom they heard was John Easter, who had produced so profound an impression upon McKendree. When George attended the meeting he was at once convicted, but became so terror-stricken that he determined to be seen among them no more. On reflection he came to a better mind, was converted, and being called to the ministry in 1789, began to travel with Cox, at that time book-steward. The latter introduced him to Asbury, who admitted him to the conference on trial in 1790. Six years later he was presiding elder of the Charleston district. The next year, compelled by illness to refrain from labor, he located, becoming a teacher. After some years of retirement he joined the Baltimore Conference, filling important positions effectively, and for the four years preceding this General Conference had been presiding elder of the Potomac district. Unction in preaching, good judgment, humility, and dignity accounted for his election.<sup>1</sup>

Roberts was born in Maryland, in 1778, of Welsh and Irish ancestors, and was converted when but fourteen; was licensed as an exhorter in 1800, and entered the ministry in 1802 under the guidance of James Quinn, beginning his ministry on Carlisle circuit, having his residence at York. After a more than usually eventful and successful probation he was admitted in 1804 into full connection; Coke and Asbury presiding. He knew the foremost men of Methodism, and attended the General Con-

<sup>1</sup> Sherman's "Life of George," in "Lives of Methodist Bishops."

ference of 1808, where he voted for an elective presiding eldership, afterward, however, changing his opinions. He was appointed in 1811 to Alexandria, Va., frequently exchanging pulpits with the Protestant Episcopal minister; here became intimate with President Madison, and whenever he visited him, closed the interview with the President and his wife with prayer.

Joseph Samson, who had been expelled from the Philadelphia Annual Conference for denying the divinity of Christ, and had appealed from the decision, appeared, admitted the correctness of the journal, made a statement, and retired. The constitutionality of the proceedings of the Philadelphia Conference was called in question; but the decision was affirmed.

Samuel Merwin moved a resolution amending the Discipline so as to secure the election of presiding elders by Annual Conferences on the nomination of bishops. The conference went into a committee of the whole, and after several meetings voted against the proposal by a majority of eighteen. This being reported to the conference, debate was resumed on the subject. An attempt was made to divide the motion, which the chair declared to be out of order, and an appeal was taken. By a majority of three the decision was sustained. The Committee on Ways and Means made it the duty of the bishop or bishops, or a committee which they might appoint in each conference, to order a course of reading and study for candidates for the ministry, and to provide for their examination.

The relation of the Methodism of the United States to that of Canada being under consideration, an elaborate communication was received from the British Methodist Missionary Society, relating the facts concerning the sending of missionaries to Montreal, and that misunderstandings had arisen between these and Henry Ryan, the pre-



siding elder for Lower Canada. The missionaries had reported to the British Conference what they had done, and Ryan had addressed to it a letter of complaint. The committee expressed the hope that the business might be settled amicably.

The conference in response recited that its committee had had several friendly interviews with the Canadian delegates, Black and Bennett, who had been invited to seats in the body, and gave the situation from its point of view; but, under all the circumstances, and especially considering the contiguity of the provinces to the western and northern parts of the United States, the General Conference resolved that "we cannot consistently with our duty to the societies of our charge in the Canadas give up any part of them or any of our chapels in those provinces to the superintendence of the British connection."

Joshua Soule was elected editor and general book-steward, and Thomas Mason associated with him.

James Axley brought forward a motion similar to that which was defeated four years before, that no preacher should distill or retail spirituous liquors without forfeiting his license. An attempt was made to amend this by adding "that every prudent means be used by our Annual and Quarterly-meeting Conferences to discourage the distilling or retailing of spirituous liquors among our people, and especially among our preachers." This was obviously unpopular and immediately withdrawn, and under the previous question Axley's motion was passed.

To slavery the conference referred as an evil past remedy; and, after striking out some neglected recommendations, enacted that "no slave-holder shall be eligible to any official station in our church hereafter, where the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom."

Two new conferences, the Mississippi and the Missouri, were added. During the debates it had been suggested that a specified district of country should be apportioned to each bishop; the majority, however, preferred to leave these things to be regulated by the bishops themselves, recommending that each bishop visit all the conferences at least once in four years.

Asbury, in 1808, had proposed that one thousand dollars be appropriated from the Book Concern for the printing of religious tracts to be given away, and increasing use had been made of them. Holy women of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the city of New York in 1817 formed a Tract Society; but much research has failed to disclose any of their names, although this organization became the nucleus of the denominational Tract Society.

Early Methodism, in America no less than in Europe, was aided powerfully by its discreet, heroic, and devout women, of the spirit, but not having the special opportunity, of Barbara Heck. Of the seven or eight members of Mr. Strawbridge's class, probably the first formed in the United States, the names of six are known, and four were women. The first converts made under Strawbridge's preaching appear to have been John Evans and his daughter, Mrs. Sarah Porter. In 1856 this lady gave an account of her father's conversion, in which she stated that while he was at Mr. Strawbridge's, assisting in doing the farm work, Strawbridge being absent on a preaching-tour, "Mrs. Strawbridge introduced the subject of experimental religion, which made such an impression on his mind as to result in his subsequent conversion to God."<sup>1</sup> Mary Wilmer was the second female class-leader in Philadelphia. Mrs. Judge White led her husband to become a Methodist, and it was she who exhorted Benjamin Abbott

<sup>1</sup> Stevens.

to give himself wholly to God. Mrs. Bassett, of Delaware, "gave her influence, means, and bright example of holiness to Methodism," as did Mrs. Prudence Gough, of Perry Hall.

On account of the privacy of their lives the names of Methodist women rarely appear in history, yet the beauty of the Lord was upon them, and—like those of these self-denying founders of the Tract Society in American Methodism—the works of their hands are "established."

During the session of the General Conference the remains of Asbury were disinterred and borne to Baltimore, where, after a sermon from McKendree, followed by a procession including all the General Conference and hundreds of other clergymen from the city and neighboring churches, they were deposited beneath the altar of Eutaw Street Church.

Less than four months after the adjournment of the conference, Jesse Lee closed his career under circumstances similar to those surrounding Whitefield in his last hours. He was perhaps the most popular in the modern sense of the term, and one of the most effective in any sense, of early American Methodist preachers. His last station was in Annapolis, the capital of Maryland. During his services there he attended a camp-meeting near Hillsboro, preaching twice, and in the evening of the day in which his last sermon was delivered was seized with a congestive chill from which he never rallied. For a short time he suffered from depression, but for several days preceding his death was exalted by holy joy. He was the founder of Methodism in New England, the first historian of the church, and chaplain of the House of Representatives at Washington from 1809 to 1815, when he resigned to satisfy the scruples of some of his brethren, who thought it "too near an approach to secular work for a man in the office of a Methodist preacher."

Asbury early chose him for the episcopacy, and several times it seemed likely he would be elected to it, but his manly independence and firmness of opinion in times of party strife were made the occasions of his defeat. In public services he might fairly be ranked next to Asbury.<sup>1</sup>

The Wesleyan Academy was established at New Market, N. H., in 1818, by New England Methodist preachers. A similar academy, known as the Wesleyan Seminary, was founded in 1819 in New York City under the patronage of the New York Conference. Dr. Samuel K. Jennings, aided by several citizens of Baltimore, founded a literary institution in that city to be known as Asbury College, but it did not succeed.

The general Missionary Society was formed in April, 1819, under the name of the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, the place of the first meeting being the Forsyth Street Church, in the city of New York, where a constitution was read and adopted. The names of the ministers present at the time the committee was appointed for its formation were Freeborn Garrettson, Joshua Soule, Samuel Merwin, Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, Thomas Mason, Seth Crowell, Samuel Howe, and Thomas Thorpe. Garrettson, Clark, and Bangs were the committee who prepared the constitution. McKendree, George, Roberts, and Nathan Bangs were respectively president, first, second, and third vice-president. Soule was treasurer, Mason corresponding secretary. The managers were well-known laymen. The entire receipts for the first year were \$823.64, and the first anniversary was held April 17, 1820.

About the same time a missionary society was formed within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference.

The "Methodist Magazine" was permanently estab-

<sup>1</sup> Stevens's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. iv., pp. 510, 511.

lished in 1818, under the editorship of Soule, and not less than ten thousand subscribers were obtained the first year.

The General Conference, to which the eleven conferences had elected eighty-nine delegates, assembled, with all the bishops present, in Baltimore May 1, 1820.

In view of the increase of seminaries and the need of religious influence and continuity of method, the bishops were authorized to appoint principals from among the traveling preachers for a longer period than two years.

Difficulties in Canada had increased, and it became necessary to appoint a formal delegate to the British Conference for the purpose of negotiation.

The hymn-book prepared by the Book Concern, consisting chiefly of hymns by John and Charles Wesley, was approved by the conference. District conferences were established.

The constitutionality of the Annual Conferences locating traveling preachers without their consent was discussed, but left unsettled.

Joshua Soule was elected a bishop, receiving forty-seven of the eighty-eight votes cast, and Nathan Bangs thirty-eight.

The conference recommended the Annual Conferences to establish, as soon as practicable, literary institutions under their own control, leaving the manner to their judgment; and it made it the special duty of the episcopacy to use their influence to carry this resolution into effect by urging it upon each of the conferences.

A protest was recorded against the rental of pews in the churches, and it was ordered that the erection of no house of worship should be commenced until three quarters of the money necessary to complete the building was in hand or subscribed.

The burning question was the election of presiding

elders. The conference resolved, first, "That whenever, in any Annual Conference, there shall be a vacancy or vacancies in the office of presiding elder, in consequence of his period of service of four years having expired, or the bishop wishing to remove any presiding elder, or by death, resignation, or otherwise, the bishop or president of the conference, having ascertained the number wanted from any of these causes, shall nominate three times the number, out of which the conference shall elect by ballot, without debate, the number wanted; *Provided*, when there is more than one wanted, not more than three at a time shall be nominated, nor more than one at a time elected; *Provided*, also, that in case of vacancy or vacancies in the interval of any Annual Conference, the bishop shall have authority to fill the said vacancy or vacancies until the ensuing Annual Conference."

Second: "That the presiding elders be, and hereby are, made the advisory counsel of the bishop or president of the conference in stationing the preachers."

This was signed by Cooper, Roszel, Bangs, Wells, Emory, and Capers. The first resolution was passed by a vote of sixty-one to twenty-five without change, and the second received a minor amendment by the consent of the committee and was then adopted.

Some days later Soule, bishop elect, addressed a letter to the episcopacy, which was publicly read, stating that if ordained he would not hold himself bound to be governed by the resolutions of the conference relative to the nomination and election of presiding elders, as he did not consider them constitutional. It was moved to reconsider them. The discussion continued until the time fixed for the ordination of Soule, and the motion to reconsider was defeated by a tie, the vote being by ballot. The next day Soule presented his resignation of the office of bishop.

A day later it was moved that the resolution concerning the nomination and election of presiding elders be suspended until the next General Conference, and that the General Superintendents be instructed to act in the interval under the old rule. A point was made that this resolution was not in order; the chair held that it was, and an appeal being taken, its decision was sustained. At the afternoon session Soule was requested to withdraw his resignation, but he declined to do so and it was accepted.

Pending the determination of the question, the constitutionality of the resolutions was discussed by the bishops in private. It was learned that Roberts was of the opinion that the resolutions infringed the constitution; George was silent, but McKendree emphatically pronounced them unconstitutional, and addressed a letter to the General Conference to that effect, and affirming that, as they were without proper authority and form, he considered himself under no obligation to enforce them, or to enjoin upon others to do so.

A proposition, signed by Roszel and Finley, for a new law advising the Annual Conferences so to alter the constitution as to give the bishops a qualified veto power when they should judge an act of the General Conference unconstitutional, was carried. Unsuccessful efforts were made to elect another superintendent. Nathan Bangs was made editor and general book-steward, and Thomas Mason assistant book-steward. The conference having decided to elect an agent for the Book Concern in Cincinnati, Martin Ruter was chosen on the second ballot. Soule, Bangs, and Ostrander were appointed a committee "to assist the episcopacy to revise the Form of Discipline, and conform it to the regulations and resolutions of this conference."

## CHAPTER XV.

### CRITICAL DISCORDS AND COMPREHENSIVE ENTERPRISES.

MCKENDREE addressed a letter to the different conferences immediately after the adjournment, protesting against the suspended resolutions as unconstitutional, and seven—the Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia—voted them to be so, of which six recommended their legalization and adoption by a change of the constitution ; five, however—the New England, New York, Genesee, Philadelphia, and Baltimore—refused to take any action.

The General Conference of 1824 assembled in Baltimore with one hundred and twenty-five members. The Rev. Richard Reece, late president of the British Conference, and the Rev. John Hannah, his accredited companion, were introduced to the conference by the senior bishop. In the letter from the British Conference and in the addresses of Mr. Reece and Mr. Hannah were eulogized the spirit and communications of John Emory, who had fulfilled his mission as fraternal delegate to their conference.

The subject of church government was discussed in the episcopal address, and referred to a committee. Lovick Pierce proposed, but without effect, a plan to authorize a new restriction on the powers of the General Conference, giving the bishops, or a majority of them, a qualified veto power, and allowing them to state within



three days their objections to any act which they deemed an infringement upon the constitution. If after receiving such communication the conference should reaffirm the said act by a majority of two thirds it should go into effect, and should it prevail by a smaller number the bishops were still to have the power to lay it before the Annual Conferences, in which case a decision of a majority should be final.

With a preamble stating that the resolutions suspended at the last General Conference "are null and void, inasmuch as a majority of the Annual Conferences have judged them unconstitutional, and whereas six recommended their adoption," it was moved that as soon as "their adoption shall be recommended by the other Annual Conferences, the same being approved by two thirds of the present General Conference, they shall go into effect."

This resolution was not carried, but a motion of David Young, with a similar preamble, resolving that the "said resolutions are not of authority and shall not be carried into effect," was passed with the narrow margin of two majority in a ballot of one hundred and twenty-four. On the last day of the session, however, a resolution was voted declaring that the suspended resolutions were "considered as unfinished business, and were not to be inserted in the revised form of the Discipline, nor carried into effect."

The conference having decided to elect two general superintendents, a ballot was taken. Joshua Soule had 64 votes, William Beauchamp 62, Elijah Hedding 61, and John Emory 59. On the next ballot Soule, having 65 votes, was elected by one majority; Hedding received 64, Beauchamp 62, and Emory 58. Before the third ballot Emory withdrew his name, Beauchamp had 60 votes, and Hedding, having 66, was elected.

Soule had demonstrated himself to be the most dominating personality, except Asbury, in the history of American

Methodism. Practically "the father of the constitution," he declined to pledge himself to comply with an unconstitutional law, resigned, and refused to withdraw his resignation, and yet, after the rancorous discussion of four years, was the first elected. He was a native of Maine, and was now in his forty-third year; he joined a Methodist class when sixteen, and began the next year to travel as the helper of an itinerant. Usually spoken of as the "boy preacher," he became famous as a polemic antagonist of Calvinism, Unitarianism, and Universalism. He was a close student and a discursive reader and, until elected book-publisher and editor of the "Methodist Magazine," had been for several years presiding elder. After the General Conference in 1820 he was stationed in the city of New York, where he remained one year, and was then transferred to Baltimore, representing that body in the Conference of 1824.

Elijah Hedding was a native of Dutchess County, New York, but was reared in a Vermont town, where there had been no public religious services until a Methodist family moved to the place, who were in the habit, in their own house, of reading Wesley's sermons to such a congregation as might assemble. Hedding, being a good reader, was asked to perform this service, though he made no profession of religion. In his nineteenth year he was converted, and in his twentieth was appointed to a charge vacated by Lorenzo Dow, "who left his circuit, imagining that God had called him to go to Ireland." The next year he was admitted to the New York Conference, and on its division in 1805 he became one of the New England branch. He was presiding elder of the New London district in 1809, sat as a delegate in the General Conference of 1812, and became renowned as a preacher and as a progressive ecclesiastical statesman. Three times he was pastor in

Boston, and under his inspiration the conference appointed a committee, of which he was one, to consider the establishment of a weekly religious paper; and during the next year was founded “Zion’s Herald,” the first weekly exclusively Methodist publication in the world. The first copy measured nine by sixteen inches. At each of the four terms that Hedding had been delegate to the General Conference he had received all but two or three votes of the entire number cast.<sup>1</sup>

Beauchamp, a native of Delaware, who came so near an election, “was a man of genuine greatness, one of nature’s noblemen and God’s elect.” He early became a Christian, was well educated, entered the ministry, and was equally popular as a preacher in Pittsburg, New York, and Boston. In 1816 he took editorial charge of the “Western Christian Monitor,” a monthly magazine, the only one then published in the church. He was the author of a book of essays on “The Truth of the Christian Religion,” was known as “the Demosthenes of the West,” and would undoubtedly have been chosen bishop had he not spent so large a portion of his life out of the itinerancy.<sup>2</sup>

Bangs was re-elected general book-steward, with Emory as assistant, and Ruter book-agent at Cincinnati.

A number of the preachers in the upper province of Canada sent a petition to the General Conference “to set them off as an independent body, with the privilege of electing a bishop to reside among them.” The resolution of the conference authorized the formation of a Canada Conference, but did not concede all that was asked.

Many memorials were presented claiming for laymen the right to representation, but it was deemed inexpedient to grant their petitions.

<sup>1</sup> “Lives of the Methodist Bishops,” p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> Stevens’s “History of the Methodist Episcopal Church,” vol. iv., p. 30.

The missions to the Indians prospered in 1824, and Peter Jones, a half-breed, English on his father's side and of the tribe of Mississagua on his mother's, became noted for preaching to the Indians and interpreting for the missionaries.

The first college organized after Cokesbury was destroyed was located at Augusta, Ky., and was named Augusta College. It was a county academy, but by the citizens was tendered to the Ohio and Kentucky conferences in 1822. J. P. Finley was principal, and in 1825 John P. Durbin was appointed professor of languages.

The Methodist Book Concern in New York began the publication of "The Christian Advocate and Journal" in 1826, issuing the first copy on the 9th of September. "The Missionary Journal," published in Charleston, S. C., preceded it for a year or two, but was merged in it, and for a time the paper bore the title, "The Christian Advocate and Journal." In August, 1828, "Zion's Herald" was consolidated with it, and for some years it was known as "The Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald." But in 1830, a new association having been formed, the publication of the present "Zion's Herald" was begun, and that part of the title was subsequently dropped. The first editor of "The Christian Advocate and Journal" was a layman named Barber Badger.

In harmony with the original impulse of Methodism, much interest was taken in education, and in 1824 an academy was established at Cazenovia, N. Y. Maine Wesleyan Seminary at Kent's Hill was incorporated in 1827, having previously received a gift of ten thousand dollars from Luther Samson.

The academy at New Market, N. H., was affiliated in 1826 with the Wesleyan Academy, founded in Wilbraham, Mass.; and Wilbur Fisk, who had been graduated with

honor from Brown University in 1815, studied law, but entered the Methodist ministry in 1818, was placed in charge. The Pittsburg Conference founded at Uniontown, Pa., an institution named Madison College, of which Henry B. Bascom was made president; but it was of short duration.

The Sunday-school Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1827. Its primary purpose was to encourage the formation of schools in small towns and scattered settlements, and to furnish them books suitable for libraries, and communications containing instructions for teachers.

The General Conference of 1828 met in Pittsburg. Garrettson was elected a delegate, but before the assembling of the conference died, universally beloved and honored both in church and state.

Josiah Randall, of the New England Conference, appealed from a decision expelling him on the charge of disseminating doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion. He was said to teach that no atonement was made by Christ for the transgressions of the law, for which men are personally responsible, and that God may, upon the condition of mere acts of the transgressor, relinquish his claims and the transgressor be pardoned without an atonement. He made his defense in person, and was answered by Wilbur Fisk. Randall admitted that the case had been fairly represented, and retired; the decision expelling him was reaffirmed by a vote of one hundred and sixty-four to one.

It was reported that Soule had preached a sermon in which there was an apparent departure from several points of doctrine held by the church. The committee appointed to inquire into the matter reported that there was "nothing in the sermon of Bishop Soule preached before the South Carolina Conference and published at its

request, fairly considered, inconsistent with our Articles of Religion as illustrated in the writings of Wesley and Fletcher," and the report was adopted.

William S. Stockton, a layman of the Philadelphia Conference, began, early in 1821, the publication, at Trenton, N. J., of the "Wesleyan Repository." It was continued for three years, its contributors being ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. An examination of the subject of church polity was carried on in several successive numbers by Nicholas Snethen, one of the strongest of the ministers of the day, a friend and, at one time, traveling companion of Bishop Asbury. As the circulation of the "Repository" increased and its utterances became more aggressive, it encountered opposition, and gained much patronage on account of an announcement in the "Methodist Magazine" of September, 1823, that the editors could not admit to the pages of that periodical "subjects of controversy which act to disturb the peace and harmony of the church," and advising those who desired changes to address petitions to the General Conference.

A circular in response to the memorialists, issued by the General Conference of 1824, contained this sentence: "If by rights and privileges it is intended to signify something foreign from the institutions of the church as we received them from our fathers, pardon us if we know no such rights and if we do not comprehend such privileges."

While that conference was still sitting a convention of reformers was held in Baltimore, attended by local and itinerant ministers—and including, as was affirmed, seventeen members of the General Conference—and by many laymen. It determined to establish a periodical entitled "The Mutual Rights of the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church," and to organize Union Societies in different parts of the country. The forma-

tion of these and the wide circulation of "Mutual Rights" naturally excited opposition from the representatives of the constituted authorities. Dennis P. Dorsey, of the Baltimore Conference, after being left for a year without an appointment, was excluded from the church for refusing to pledge himself to desist from spreading what the conference regarded as incendiary publications. William C. Pool received the same punishment for circulating "Mutual Rights" and attending Union Meetings. In one month eleven local preachers and twenty-two laymen were expelled in Baltimore. These took an appeal to the district conference. Much excitement resulted, and the wives and friends of those who had been ejected, in all fifty women, withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

A convention of reformers assembled in Baltimore in 1827 and prepared a memorial to the next General Conference and an address to the public.

The complication of Hedding with the controversy diverted attention from principles to persons. He had delivered an address to the Pittsburg Conference on the duty of Methodist ministers with reference to current discussions of church reform, and one of the members of that body reported his remarks in "Mutual Rights," and, in the opinion of the bishop, traduced him; whereupon he demanded reparation from that paper, and, the response not being satisfactory, he laid the matter before the General Conference. It was referred to a committee, before which appeared the bishop, the writer of the article, and the delegates from the Pittsburg Conference. The report adopted by the conference thus exonerated the bishop: "The address of Bishop Hedding, as recalled by himself and the delegates of the Pittsburg Conference, not only was not deserving of censure, but was such as the circumstances of the case rendered it his official duty to deliver."

The conference was obliged to consider the case of Dennis P. Dorsey, who, when tried before the Baltimore Conference, made declarations which that body could not approve. The judgment pronounced was that he should be reprimanded by the bishop and left for one year without an appointment. He appealed, but, in public speeches and through the columns of "*Mutual Rights*," denounced the action, instead of waiting in silence till the General Conference. On this account he was expelled in 1828. He now presented two distinct appeals: first, from the action reproofing and suspending him; and second, from the decision by which he was expelled. His plea on the first issue was not admitted, but the second was discussed at length. Asa Shinn, a pleader of unusual power in statement, and eloquent withal, argued the case for the appellants. Pool also had appealed.

The delegation of the Baltimore Conference responded to Shinn's statement of facts and argument, and Fisk took part in the debate, speaking at great length, as did Emory. The result was that the decisions expelling Dorsey and Pool were reaffirmed; but a publication was made by the conference of the grounds of its action, affirming that it could not justly be construed as denying to minister or member of the Methodist Episcopal Church any liberty of speech or of the press consistent with moral obligations as Christians and the associate obligations of Methodists, and affectionately appealing to brethren to desist from patronizing and circulating such publications as the "*Mutual Rights*," and proposing that no further prosecution be instituted against any minister or member on the ground of past agency in the matter, and, with certain qualifications, allowing a period of six months for the acceptance of the amnesty or the conditions.

Snethen, who had located, took large part in these contro-



versies prior to the General Conference of 1828, becoming the most aggressive of the opponents of the existing order. To meet him Thomas E. Bond, a local preacher and practicing physician of Baltimore, issued an appeal to the Methodists in opposition to the changes proposed in their church government, his book being dedicated to Snethen. Alexander McCaine, a former secretary of the General Conference, published a work called "History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy." To him Emory replied to the satisfaction of all who held to the old ways, and to the disgust of those who had committed themselves to reform.

The expelled members and their sympathizers, assembled in Baltimore in November, 1827, formed a society called "Associate Methodist Reformers," and prepared a memorial to the approaching General Conference. To it the conference replied in a report prepared by John Emory, designed to show that the various demands of the reformers were not founded on natural or acquired right, and were of such a character that if granted they would undermine the practical system which had given to Methodism its success. The report charges that the organization of Union Societies was the source of the principal evils.

The reformers were most numerous in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, and Cincinnati. They applied the title of Old Side to those who adhered to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Early in 1828 charges were brought against various ministers who refused to receive the overtures of the General Conference. While some were expelled, many withdrew, taking with them classes and leaders, leaving church property behind, but proceeding at once to gather funds to buy and build. Two local preachers and nine laymen, stewards, elders, and exhorters, were cut off before the close of the year in Lynchburg, Va. This was followed by a large secession. Similar difficul-

ties occurred in North Carolina. A general convention of Methodist reformers assembled in Baltimore in November, and soon afterward conferences were organized in different States, so far as possible in harmony with the principles of the Methodist Episcopal Church, except in the points upon which the reformers had taken issue.

An association was formed in Pittsburg including a large number of members. After many such combinations had been effected a general convention assembled in Baltimore, November 2, 1830, to frame a constitution and discipline, a draft having been previously prepared by a committee. It was adopted after amendment. The new denomination was styled the Methodist Protestant Church.

The point of controversy, reduced to its last analysis, was declared by the reformers to be a pure and unmixed question of representation of the laity in the Annual and General Conferences. Yet it was complicated with other questions, and these occupied a prominent part in the discussion. The reformers were strongly opposed to episcopacy, and the book issued by McCaine was well calculated to create personal feeling that could not be allayed. They were also opposed to the presiding eldership.

One of the most distinguished of their early ministers, Truman Bishop, M.D., for a number of years had been a superannuated member of the Ohio Conference; first locating, he withdrew from the denomination. He experienced much mental anxiety on account of his relations to the church, and died soon after he took this step. Asa Shinn had been insane for nearly a year, but upon the death of Bishop, having recovered, went to Cincinnati and took charge of the church which had enjoyed the services of Bishop, for this purpose withdrawing from the Pittsburg Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

He preached the dedicatory sermon of the new church, and under his superintendence the society prospered, as did the whole movement everywhere. In four years the number of members reported from the fourteen conferences was 26,587.

Although the territory of Canada had been amicably divided with the Wesleyan connection, leaving Upper Canada under the superintendence of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the troubles in that country continued. The preachers, having chiefly emigrated from the United States, were denied certain privileges enjoyed by natives and by ministers from England, and the celebration of matrimony was especially embarrassed. A solemn appeal therefore was made by the Canada Conference to the General Conference of 1828 for release from responsible connection with it; this was referred to a committee of seven, of which Bangs, who in his early ministry had endured much hardship in Canada, was appointed chairman.

On the report of this committee the conference adopted a plan to allow Annual Conferences in Upper Canada to elect a general superintendent for the Methodist Episcopal Church in that province, and to authorize the general superintendents in the United States to ordain him; and by another resolution it provided for furnishing the periodicals published by the Methodist Book Concern on the same terms as were allowed to Methodists in the United States, and ordered that if the Canadian Conference continued to patronize the Methodist Book Concern they should receive an equal appropriation of any annual dividend which might be made by the Book Concern to the several Annual Conferences respectively.

“When the subject first came up for consideration,” says Bangs, “it was contended, and the committee to whom

it was first referred so reported, which report was approved by a vote of the General Conference, that that body had no *constitutional* right to set off the brethren in Canada as an independent body, because the terms of the contract by which the General Conference existed made obligatory on it as a delegated body to preserve the union entire, and not to break up the church into separate fragments."

Emory, however, proposed a way out of the difficulty based upon the assumption that the preachers who went to Canada from the United States did so in the first instance as missionaries, and that ever afterward, when additional help was needed, Asbury and his successors asked for volunteers, not claiming the right to send them in the same authoritative manner in which they were appointed to the different parts of the United States. From this Emory deduced the doctrine that it was perfectly compatible with the powers of the delegated General Conference, thus connected by a voluntary or conditional contract either expressed or implied, to dissolve the connection. Bangs states that the agreement was based wholly on this principle.<sup>1</sup> It was stipulated that any bishop ordained for Canada under the agreement should not be allowed to exercise episcopal functions in the United States.

The conference was flooded with memorials concerning speculative freemasonry. These were referred to a special committee, but the conference wisely refused to make a deliverance upon a subject of which it could not acquire sufficient knowledge to test the nature and tendency of the organization, and whose members it could not condemn so long as they comported themselves in harmony with the rules of the church.

There were also many petitions concerning ardent spirits.

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. iii., pp. 390-392.

On motion of Wilbur Fisk a very moderate resolution was passed :

“WHEREAS, The rules and examples of the Wesleyan Methodists from the commencement of their existence as a people, both in Europe and America, were calculated to suppress intemperance and to discountenance the needless use of ardent spirits; and

“WHEREAS, The public mind in our country for a few years past has been remarkably awakened to a sense of the importance of this subject; therefore

“*Resolved*, 1. That we rejoice in all the laudable and proper efforts now making to promote this just object, so important to the interest both of church and nation.

“*Resolved*, 2. That all our preachers and people be expected, and they are hereby expected, to adhere to their first principles as contained in their excellent rules on this subject, and as practiced by our fathers, and to do all they prudently can, both by precept and example, to suppress intemperance throughout the land.

“*Resolved*, 3. That, to bring about the reformation desired on this subject, it is important that we neither drink ourselves (except medicinally) nor give it to visitors or workmen.”

Wilbur Fisk and William Capers were elected fraternal delegates to the British Conference.

When the General Conference of 1832 assembled in Philadelphia, its members deplored the absence of Bishop George, who had closed his laborious and exemplary life September 23, 1828.

Great was the rejoicing over the denominational returns. In the four years preceding the close of 1831 there had been an addition of 131,117 members and 434 ministers; giving a total of 513,114 members and 2010 ministers.

An important change was made in the sixth restrictive

rule, so as to make it possible, upon the concurrent recommendation of three quarters of the members of the Annual Conferences present and voting, for a majority of two thirds of the next General Conference to alter any of the restrictive rules except the first. It was also provided that when two thirds of a General Conference shall have recommended the same, and three quarters of the members of the ensuing Annual Conferences present and voting shall concur, such alterations shall take effect.

James Osgood Andrew of the Georgia, and John Emory of the Baltimore, Conference, were elected bishops, 223 ballots being cast, each bearing two names; Andrew had 140 and Emory 135 votes. Andrew was the son of a Methodist preacher, and was born in 1794; he entered the South Carolina Conference at eighteen, and though having little education when he began to preach, his improvement was constant; he was equally ingratiating in private and in public, and, while eloquent on all occasions, such was his devotion to the cause of missions that in speaking upon that theme he seemed to surpass all previous efforts. "In the heated strife of 1820 and 1824 he had so borne himself as not to incur the enmity of the progressives."<sup>1</sup>

William Capers was probably the most popular preacher in the South. At a meeting of delegates to consider candidates, he was asked to allow his name to be presented for the office of bishop, but he declined, stating that he was "unwillingly a slave-holder, and that he did not wish to be brought into antagonism as a candidate with Andrew, whom he suggested as suitable for the office." Andrew was not a slave-holder, neither was his father; therefore there appeared no danger that he would inherit slaves. This statement greatly contributed to the large vote which Andrew received.

<sup>1</sup> Smith's "Life and Letters of J. O. Andrew," p. 230.

Emory was a native of Maryland, the son of a man noted for industry, honesty, and decision of character and for usefulness as a class-leader. His mother was reared in the English church, but shortly before her marriage had become a Methodist. Emory's father, having occupied various judiciary positions, designed his son for the profession of law. His progress was so rapid that he was admitted to the bar in his nineteenth year. Against the wish of his father he yielded to a call to preach, which so bitterly disappointed the former that years elapsed before he became sufficiently reconciled to consent to hear his son preach, and did not express himself as fully conciliated until he approached death.

Emory was elected to the first General Conference to which he was eligible, that of 1816. He was corresponding secretary of the newly formed Missionary Society, and was chosen a delegate to the General Conference of 1820. That body having directed that a delegate be sent to the British Conference to settle difficulties rising out of the Canada question, the bishops selected Emory. His subsequent career increased the respect in which he was held. On account of his advocacy of the election of presiding elders he was not returned to the General Conference of 1824, but notwithstanding this he was appointed its secretary, and had he received six votes additional to those given him would have been elected bishop. He was made assistant book-agent in 1828, in which office, as everywhere, he was successful. His services in the controversy which led to the establishment of the Methodist Protestant Church and his election to the episcopacy gave general satisfaction.

Having failed to secure from the preceding conference a condemnation of freemasonry, the petitioners now asked for decided action on secret societies, but the committee

to whom the memorials were referred declined to act, on the ground that "the very attempt might involve serious difficulties."

John P. Durbin was elected editor of the "Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald," the "Youth's Instructor," the "Child's Magazine," tracts and Sunday-school books. The "Methodist Magazine" was transformed into the "Quarterly Review" in 1830, and the book-agent, Emory, edited it until this conference, when Nathan Bangs succeeded him.

At the General Conference Rev. Melville B. Cox volunteered to go as missionary to Liberia, and was gladly accepted by the bishops. He arrived in Liberia on the 8th of March, 1833, and was cordially received by Acting Governor Williams, a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He held a camp-meeting on the next day, and on the 6th of April opened a Sunday-school; on the 9th the Methodists in Liberia, consisting of emigrants to that colony from the United States, signed articles of agreement resigning the superintendency of all the churches in that country, adopting the Articles of Religion, General Rules, and moral discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America, acknowledging the authority of the General Conference, and requesting the ordination of Williams, who had been duly recommended, as deacon and elder.

Three days later Cox was attacked by the dreaded African fever, and when supposed to have recovered, relapsed, lingering until the 21st of July, when he died. Just before sailing for Liberia he was asked what he would like inscribed upon his tombstone should he die in Africa. He responded, "Let thousands fall before Africa be given up." Although the denomination was greatly depressed by his death, its missionary fervor was increased.



Wesleyan University is the oldest institution of the highest grade founded by American Methodism. Certain buildings erected for a military academy in 1825 at Middletown, Conn., were transferred to the trustees in 1830, at which date a preparatory school was opened. The university proper, having been chartered in 1831, received students in the fall of the same year, under the presidency of Wilbur Fisk. The condition on which the property had been transferred was that the church should furnish an endowment of forty thousand dollars. The New York and New England conferences accepted the proposition and raised the amount. The Genesee Conference Seminary at Lima, N. Y., was also established in 1831.

The Virginia Conference founded Randolph Macon College in 1832; and the next year Dickinson College, at Carlisle, Pa., established fifty years before, was transferred to the Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and John P. Durbin was called to the presidency. It was opened for students in 1834, forty-five thousand dollars in donations and subscriptions having been received.

Allegheny College, at Meadville, Pa., an institution which was chartered in 1815 but which had become moribund from lack of support, was resuscitated in 1834, and its grounds and buildings given to the Methodist Episcopal Church and adopted by the Pittsburg and Erie conferences. Martin Ruter was the first president. The Vermont Methodist Seminary and Female College was established in 1834, and such was the interest in education that at the close of that year there were twenty academies under the patronage of the denomination, and, besides the colleges already founded, the Illinois Conference founded on the 20th of February, 1828, a seminary at Lebanon, Ill., twenty-four miles east of St. Louis. The first resolution concerning it

was moved by Peter Cartwright. It opened that year under the name of Lebanon Seminary, Edward R. Ames, principal. It relied for support upon the whole territory west of the State of Ohio and north of the Ohio River. Bishop McKendree, in 1830, made a gift to the institution of four hundred and eighty acres of land, and its name was then changed from Lebanon Seminary to McKendree College, though its charter as a collegiate institution was not given until 1834. Soon after this Peter Akers was elected president.

The General Conference of 1832 authorized the establishment of the "Western Christian Advocate" at Cincinnati, Thomas A. Morris being appointed editor. The Pittsburg "Christian Advocate" was established in 1833 by the Pittsburg Conference, with Charles Elliott as editor.

Additional missionaries were sent to Liberia in 1834. Within four months the wife of one of the missionaries died, and soon afterward her husband; in less than a year eight missionaries from this country had died, several of whom were Presbyterians, and one an Episcopalian. Lieutenant-Governor Williams visited the United States during this year, and was ordained deacon and elder by Bishop Hedding. The Rev. John Seys was appointed superintendent of the mission, and arrived in Africa on the 18th of October, accompanied by Francis Burns, a young colored preacher. Liberia now seemed destined to a career of prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

Missions to the Flathead Indians were established, and the brothers Jason and Daniel Lee and their colleagues began work in Oregon.

Bishop McKendree died at Nashville, Tenn., on the 5th of March, 1835. He is worthy of being ranked next to

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Reid's "Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., p. 142.

Asbury in helpfulness to early Methodism. He had long been in failing health, and the church received the intelligence of his death with sadness, but without surprise.

Bishop Emory, on the 16th of December in the same year, started from his home in a light carriage to go to Baltimore. Shortly afterward he was found by the roadside about two miles from his home insensible, with a fractured skull. He remained unconscious until his death in the evening. It was supposed that he was thrown out while descending a hill. In temperament, ability, and accomplishments he differed from all his episcopal colleagues and predecessors; he resembled Wesley in system, administrative ability, and mental clearness; and in general information and scholarship he was far superior to any Methodist of his time except Wilbur Fisk. His tragical end gave the church a severe shock, and for years the mention of his name in a public congregation elicited manifestations of sorrow.

The buildings of the Book Concern with the entire stock were destroyed by fire on the 18th of February, 1836. The loss was estimated at a quarter of a million dollars. A collection was made amounting to more than eighty-eight thousand dollars, which, added to the insurance and the value of the ground, aggregated two hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars. With this were procured buildings far better than the former, and machinery of the most improved type.

The General Conference of 1832 recommended the bishops and the Missionary Society to establish missions in South America, and advised the appointment of a suitable person to travel there and report upon the condition and needs of the people. Soon afterward a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church who had settled in Buenos Ayres and succeeded in forming a small class petitioned for a missionary. In July, 1835, the bishops directed the

Rev. Fountain E. Pitts, of the Tennessee Conference, to make the tour. He visited Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Buenos Ayres, and other places, and after forming several societies returned to this country.<sup>1</sup> On invitation of the General Conference Pitts reported in person the results of this tour.

The General Conference of 1836 convened in Cincinnati, Roberts, Soule, Hedding, and Andrew being present. William Lord, delegate from the Wesleyan connection, and William Case, delegate from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada, addressed the conference. The address sent by the British Conference took strong anti-slavery ground and stirred opposition. Bangs, Capers, and Morris were appointed a committee to prepare a reply. An abolition meeting was held in Cincinnati on Tuesday, May 10th, and George Storrs of New Hampshire and Samuel Norris from Maine, delegates to the General Conference, delivered addresses. Two days later resolutions were introduced which provoked debate, in which Orange Scott, of the New England Conference, took the most uncompromising abolition grounds. As finally adopted they were:

“*Resolved* by the delegates, That they disapprove in the most unqualified sense the conduct of the two members of the General Conference who are reported to have lectured in this city, Cincinnati, recently upon, and in favor of, modern abolitionism.

“Second, That they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere with the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slave-holding States of this Union.

“Third, That the foregoing preamble and resolutions be published in our periodicals.”

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Reid's "Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. i., p. 232.

For these resolutions one hundred and twenty votes were cast, and the largest number cast against them at any stage was fourteen.

On the general subject of slavery the conference resolved that "it is inexpedient to make any change in our book of Discipline respecting slavery, and that we deem it improper, therefore, to agitate the subject in the General Conference at present."

Three bishops were chosen, Beverly Waugh, Wilbur Fisk, and Thomas A. Morris. Waugh was a Virginian, forty-seven years of age. He entered the Baltimore Conference in his twentieth year, and, having been successful as pastor and presiding elder, in 1828 he was made assistant editor and book-agent, and in 1832, when Emory became bishop, though not a delegate to the conference, was elected senior book-agent.

When chosen bishop, Fisk was in England as delegate to the British Conference.

Thomas A. Morris was forty-two years of age, had served twenty years as pastor and presiding elder, and during four years preceding his election to the episcopacy had been editor of the "Western Christian Advocate." He was a Virginian, served in the militia six months in a war with the British and Indians, decided upon the legal profession, became a skeptic in religion, but was reclaimed therefrom and converted. He inclined to join the Baptist Church, of which his parents were members, but after a period of hesitation and debate became a Methodist. As a preacher he was unpretentious in manner, but noted for common sense and a mastery of Anglo-Saxon.

Charles Elliott was elected editor of the "Western Christian Advocate," Nathan Bangs corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, Samuel Luckey editor of the "Christian Advocate and Journal" and "Quarterly

Review," with John A. Collins as assistant. Official "Advocates" were established at Charleston, S. C., Richmond, Va., Nashville, Tenn.

The conference decided that an Annual Conference might locate members without their consent, and that the Discipline did not allow them an appeal. To establish a uniform proceeding in such cases a form of trial was enacted.

Fisk, on his return from Europe, declined the office of bishop, assigning the state of his health, and his belief that he could accomplish more for the church as president of Wesleyan University than was possible in any other position.

Justin Spaulding, of the New England Conference, sailed for Rio Janeiro, Brazil, on the 22d of March, 1836, being sent out by appointment of the bishop. He had the missionary spirit, and had previously offered himself for Oregon. John Dempster sailed for Buenos Ayres in October of the same year. Spaulding preached to the English and American portion of the population, but distributed the Scriptures in the Portuguese language, with which the American Bible Society gratuitously furnished him. His reports were so favorable that Daniel P. Kidder, accompanied by two teachers, went on November 12, 1837, to reinforce him. Kidder speedily mastered the Portuguese language, and did much good, although the laws of the country would not allow him to preach to the natives in their own tongue. Dempster had succeeded so well that in less than a year the people subscribed fifteen hundred dollars toward a church, and the Missionary Society appropriated ten thousand dollars to meet the additional expense necessary for its erection.

Missions were established in Texas in 1837. Martin Ruter resigned his presidency of Allegheny College and, accompanied by two preachers, entered upon his work as

missionary. Texas had been visited as early as 1819 by Methodist preachers, the most conspicuous of whom was William Stevenson. John B. Denton and E. B. Duncan were appointed to the Sulphur Forks circuit in 1835. Denton, taught by his wife, learned his letters at night by the light of blazing pine-knots. A historian of Methodism in Texas says that the people of Virginia were not more surprised at the eloquence of Patrick Henry in the Tithe suit than were the Arkansans by the oratorical powers of this unlettered frontiersman. He soon gave up preaching in order better to support his family, and became a lawyer; but as he prospered and paid off his debts he determined to reënter the itinerancy, which he did, and crossed into Texas in company with Littleton Fowler. An Indian raid prevented the camp-meeting from being held. A company of citizens collected to pursue the savages. Denton, the natural leader, was riding in advance when an Indian rose in a thicket and fired at him, and he fell, mortally wounded.<sup>1</sup>

Ruter soon preached before the Texas congress, consulted with leading men, laid plans to establish a college, and traveled day and night. He collected the names of three hundred persons who had been Methodists before coming to Texas, and decided that he needed twelve additional missionaries; but his exposures and labors proved too severe, and he died May 16, 1838.

Abel Stevens arrived in Texas in 1839, with the Rev. Mr. Hoss, agent of the American Bible Society. Stevens remained several months and preached with great acceptability, and then "returned to the North to become the historian of Methodism."

William Nast, a native of Stuttgart, Germany, born in 1807, who had studied theology and philosophy, came to

<sup>1</sup> H. S. Thrall's 'History of Methodism in Texas' (Houston, Tex., 1872).

the United States at the age of twenty-one. He supported himself for a time as a private teacher, and later taught German at West Point. He was then a rationalist, but became interested in Law's "Call to the Unconverted" and Taylor's "Holy Living," adopted Methodist views, and, after acting as professor of modern languages at Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, was chosen professor of Greek and Hebrew at Kenyon College, Ohio. He was received on trial in the Ohio Conference, and appointed German missionary to Cincinnati in 1835. The next year the German missions were organized by the Missionary Society. In January, 1839, the Western Book Concern issued "Der christliche Apologete," with Nast as editor.

Emory College, in Georgia, was chartered early in 1837.

The first centenary of Methodism was celebrated in 1839. The day fixed was the 21st of October, which commemorated the forming of the first Methodist class. Sermons, however, were delivered on the previous day preparatory to collections for missions, education, and for the superannuated preachers. About one half was to be devoted to the needy ministers, one fifth to the support of missions, and the remainder to education. The amount subscribed was not far from six hundred thousand dollars, and the celebration exerted a highly beneficial influence upon all the interests of Methodism.

The Indiana Asbury University, founded by the Indiana Conference, which at that time included the State, had been opened in 1836 as a preparatory school, but was fully organized in 1838 as a university, and Matthew Simpson, A.M., its first president, entered upon his duties in April, 1839.<sup>1</sup>

At the General Conference of 1840, which met in Bal-

<sup>1</sup> Professor George L. Curtiss's "Manual of Methodist Episcopal Church History" (Hunt & Eaton).



timore, a profound impression was made by the personal communications and public addresses of Robert Newton, fraternal delegate from the British Conference, and great interest elicited by the presence of Joseph Stinson, representative from the Canada Conference, accompanied by four members of that body.

The address of the bishops displayed statesmanlike ability in the discussion of church government and the institutions and enterprises of Methodism. It may be doubted if an abler document was ever presented to an ecclesiastical body.

The conference decided two grave principles of administration: First, that it is the prerogative of the bishop to decide questions of law in an Annual, subject to an appeal to the General Conference; but the application of the law is with the former. Second, that it belongs to the president of a Quarterly Meeting to decide questions of law in the Quarterly Conference, subject to an appeal to the president of the next Annual Conference; but the application of the law shall be with the former. The conference also decided that the president of an Annual or a Quarterly Conference had the right to decline putting a motion or resolution to vote if he considered it foreign to the proper business or inconsistent with constitutional provisions, and also to adjourn a conference without a formal vote.<sup>1</sup>

An attempt had been made to substitute Wesley's rule on temperance for the one in the Discipline. Two thousand and eighty ministers were present in the Annual Conference and voted on the resolution authorizing the General Conference to make the change, and all but three hundred and six voted in the affirmative; but the committee of the General Conference to which the subject was submitted reported against the change, interpreting the law

<sup>1</sup> Bangs, vol. iv., p. 396.

to mean that three quarters of the members in every Annual Conference must be in favor of the contemplated measure before it could be lawfully carried into effect.

The Sunday-school Union was organized according to the principles of a new constitution. The American Colonization Society was almost unanimously approved and commended to the patronage of Methodists.

The pastoral address to the church deplored the decline of attendance on class-meetings, especially condemned novels, and exhorted parents to dedicate their infant offspring to God in holy baptism.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE "IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT."

FROM its foundation in the United States until the year 1800 Methodism had testified against slavery as a moral evil. Many of its enactments were uncompromising, and all were beyond the position taken by other churches and in advance of public sentiment; although very soon after the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized concessions began to be made in view of the necessities of the South.

The tone of condemnation was softened in 1804, and "in 1808 all that relates to slave-holding among private members was stricken out, and no rule on the subject has existed since."<sup>1</sup>

The New England Antislavery Society was organized in 1832; the American in 1833. At a convention in Philadelphia there were sixty-three abolitionists from eleven States of the Union; among them William Lloyd Garrison and John G. Whittier. They lectured and distributed tracts, until in the year 1835 they were able to expend thirty-five thousand dollars, issue a million publications, organize five hundred auxiliary societies, and keep fourteen lecture agents employed.

The Ohio Conference in that year passed a resolution

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Durbin, debates of 1844. "Journal of General Conference," vol. ii., p. 174.

against abolition and antislavery societies. The Baltimore Conference, in 1836, declared itself convinced of the great evil of slavery, but opposed in every part and particular to the proceedings of the abolitionists. The Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and Michigan conferences of 1838 passed similar resolutions, declaring it incompatible with the duties and obligations of Methodist preachers to deliver abolition lectures, promote meetings in the interest of that movement, attend its conventions, or circulate its publications.

The first Methodist abolition society was formed in New York City in 1833. La Roy Sunderland presided, and Bishop Hedding was chosen permanent president, but declined to serve. The New England Conference, sitting at Lynn in 1835, organized a society, advocating the immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery, and the English abolitionist, George Thompson, was invited to preach to them. The same year the New Hampshire Conference formed a similar organization. "Zion's Herald" was opened to articles in favor of abolition, and published an appeal to the members of the New England and New Hampshire conferences, written by Sunderland, and signed by him and several prominent ministers. It was answered in the same paper by a counter-appeal written by D. D. Whedon, and signed by Wilbur Fisk, the famous Father Taylor, Abel Stevens, Bishop Hedding, and five others.

Of the sixteen delegates elected by the New England and New Hampshire conferences to the General Conference of 1836 fourteen were pronounced abolitionists. One memorial was presented, signed by two hundred ministers, asking for the restoration of the original rule on slavery. Another was signed by 2284 lay members. Many other petitions were referred to a committee, but the conference passed resolutions condemning abolitionism, and censured

George Storrs and Samuel Norris for attending abolition meetings.

The New York Wesleyan Society issued "Zion's Watchman" on the 1st of January, 1836, with Sunderland as editor. Orange Scott issued the "Wesleyan Quarterly Review" in 1838. The "Wesleyan Journal" of Hallowell, and the "New England Christian Advocate" of Lowell, Luther Lee editor, at different times were used as organs by the Methodist abolitionists. Orange Scott and Jotham Horton established, in Lowell, Mass., in 1840, an antislavery paper called the "American Wesleyan Observer."

After the General Conference of 1836 the abolitionists increased their activity, being greatly stirred up by the declarations of that body. The abolitionists in the New England Conference in 1837, anticipating that the bishop would refuse to put any motion involving slavery and abolition, determined that they would block all business and adjourn from time to time, and notified Bishop Waugh of their purpose. He offered to allow them to adopt a respectful petition to the next General Conference. Conventions were held, each augmenting the excitement and committing the members to the strongest position on slavery, and the bishops refused in many instances to put motions relating to the subject. Bishop Waugh, in the New England Conference, refused to put a motion to refer to a committee memorials on slavery, and would not allow an appeal from this decision; declined to give an opinion as to whether the memorials had been received, and refused to put a motion for an expression as to whether the said memorials were in possession of the conference.

The bishop presiding at the New Hampshire Conference stipulated six conditions before allowing the appointment

of a committee on slavery, and these the conference refused to accept. Bishop Hedding prepared an address on the subject in which he held that, in harmony with the golden rule, there were cases in which a man might hold, and under the civil law own, a slave; declared that he believed that there were many such; adding, "And I am not authorized to be the instrument of passing various resolutions which even imply that they are all sinners."

The New York Conference resolved that no one ought to be elected to the office of deacon or elder unless he would give a pledge that he would refrain from agitating the church with discussions on slavery.

Lucius C. Matlack, three months previous to the sitting of the Annual Conference, was unanimously licensed as a local preacher by the Union charge in Philadelphia at the last Quarterly Conference of 1837, and was unanimously recommended to be received as a traveling preacher. In the interval twelve members of the Methodist Church in Philadelphia met and formed a Wesleyan Antislavery Society. Matlack assisted to organize this society, and was appointed secretary. When the Philadelphia Conference met, and the recommendation of Matlack was presented, a brother highly commended him, but closed his remarks as follows: "In justice to Brother Matlack and this conference, I am constrained to say he is a modern abolitionist." One of the presiding elders then said, "Mr. President, the abolitionists are radicals. This young man is a radical. These radicals deny your authority and the authority of the General Conference. He has been spoken of as a young man of talents and piety. If he were as pious as St. Paul and as talented as an angel, he should never enter this conference as an abolitionist if I could prevent it." After remarks by others the case was laid upon the table.

Subsequently Matlack served as pastor under the direction of a presiding elder, but at the next session of the Philadelphia Conference, when his application for admission was renewed, a committee was appointed to confer with him. He acknowledged himself "a modern abolitionist," and when the fact was reported he was unanimously rejected; but on motion of a presiding elder his employment on any district during the next year was authorized, though many consistently voted against it. At the Quarterly Conference of the Union charge in Philadelphia, January 10, 1839, Matlack was refused a renewal of his license. That his "gifts, graces, and usefulness" were universally approved and that the sole charge against him was abolitionism are proved by a letter from President Durbin of Dickinson College, who was on the committee to confer with him, and by a testimonial from the Quarterly Conference of the Union charge, signed by seven of the members of the body:

"DICKINSON COLLEGE, September 21, 1838.

"SIR: I have received your letter of the 19th inst. I am not sure that I was in conference when your case was decided. But I am satisfied that I did not hear (or if I did I do not remember) anything urged against you except your connection with abolitionism. I supposed then, and suppose now, that this was the cause why you were not received. If there were other causes I do not recollect them.

"Respectfully,

"J. P. DURBIN."

"The undersigned, being members of the Quarterly Meeting Conference of Union charge, Philadelphia, and being present at the session of said conference, January 10, 1839, when the license of Brother Lucius C. Matlack

as a local preacher was withheld, deem it an act of justice to him to state that the only alleged cause for withholding his license was his having delivered public lectures in support of 'modern abolitionism,' with his avowed intention to deliver such lectures as occasion might offer, and being in favor of getting up antislavery societies in the church.

“WILLIAM WILLIAMS,      “HENRY J. PEPPER,  
“A. LUDINGTON,          “SAMUEL Y. MONROE,  
“THOMAS TAYLOR,        “MITCHELL BENNIS,  
“THOMAS K. PETERSON.”

Charles K. True, James Floy, and Paul R. Brown, of the New York Conference, were tried by that body in 1838 for aiding in the publication of an antislavery tract, attending an antislavery convention at Utica, and violating an alleged pledge made the year before. Luther Lee, of the Black River Conference, acted as counsel for True, who, however, was suspended by a vote of ninety-one to thirty-seven. Floy also was suspended. The next day both agreed to refrain from such actions as the conference should forbid, and to abide by its decisions on the subject of slavery so long as they remained members of the body. Brown refused to make any acknowledgment, and the conference voted that he be rebuked by the bishop.

The Pittsburg Conference dropped a probationer of ability for lecturing against slavery. The Erie Conference suspended Benjamin Preston for delivering abolition lectures and for denouncing the suspensions in the New York Conference. J. S. Barris, a presiding elder, was admonished for similar conduct.

When the issue was fairly joined the antislavery party divided into two well-defined wings. The radical abolitionists held all slave-holding to be sinful; that no slave-holder should be continued in the communion of the



Methodist Episcopal Church; that the Methodist Church was largely responsible for the continuance of slavery in the United States; that the Discipline should be so changed as to exclude them. The conservative antislavery men replied that the Old Testament recognized the patriarchs as owning slaves, and the New Testament nowhere forbade it. Many others in the church declared slavery to be right, and the only proper condition for the negro race, and attempted to prove it by the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

The first regular Methodist antislavery convention was held in the Methodist Episcopal church at Cazenovia, N. Y., August 3, 1837. The second large one was held at Utica, N. Y., May 2, 3, 1838. It elected Orange Scott and Luther Lee delegates to represent Methodist abolitionists before the English Wesleyan and the Canada Wesleyan conferences respectively. Lee was informed by the president of the Canada Conference in a private interview that, though it was in sympathy with the abolitionists, it would be improper to receive a delegate, lest the friendly relations between the two bodies be disturbed. On that account Scott did not visit England.

The Third General Convention was held in Lowell, Mass., in November, 1838, pursuant to a call issued by James Porter and signed by nearly fifteen hundred names. Joseph A. Merrill presided; Timothy Merritt, formerly assistant editor of the "Christian Advocate," was first vice-president; La Roy Sunderland, Elihu Scott, and L. C. Matlack were secretaries.

Bishop Hedding, prior to this convention, delivered from manuscript an address of four hours in length to the New England Conference, on the basis of which Orange Scott was made the subject of charges. He replied to the bish-

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph in the Methodist Episcopal Church," pp. 122-125.

op's speech, acknowledging that he had made erroneous statements injurious to the reputation of Bishop Hedding, but said that he had retracted a number and was prepared to retract others. The complaints were not pressed, but the following year the bishop presented to the conference formal charges against Scott. They were not sustained.

Sunderland, charged with slanderous misrepresentation, was tried before the New England Conference in 1836, Nathan Bangs being the prosecutor, but was acquitted by a two-thirds vote; was tried the next year, Bangs prosecuting, but acquitted; again in 1838 with similar result, and in 1839, on charges made by the New York Annual Conference, which was represented by Bangs and by Francis Hodgson, the most acute debater the church has produced, and one of its most forcible orators, and again acquitted. Finally a committee in New York tried him in his absence, and declared him suspended from the ministry until the next session of the New England Conference, when the proceedings were set aside.

He was immediately put on trial on a new charge of having slandered Bishop Soule by admitting into the "Watchman" the false statement that he had said that he had never yet advised the liberation of a slave, and that he never should; also for publishing a criticism in verse by a female correspondent, with an editorial remark that every letter of it was justified. One stanza of the criticism is this:

Receive this truth—deep, dark, thy stain;  
Thy very soul is tinged with blood;  
Go, do thy first works o'er again—  
Go, cleanse thee in the Saviour's blood.

Soule presided during this trial. James Porter, himself an extraordinary debater, writing in 1875, says: "Mr.

Sunderland's defenses were wonderful specimens of defensive power, such as we have never heard excelled in any court or conference since." Sunderland was below medium size, his voice was husky and on the lowest key, whereas his opponent spoke in thunder tones. Sunderland said, "I envy the vocal power of my enemy; but, sir, that is all I do envy about that man."

The rulings of Soule in a case where his own reputation was involved were such as to provoke sharp words from Sunderland. The bishop attempted to maintain his dignity by administering a very stern rebuke: "In all my experience and in all my intercourse with my fellow-men, I have this to say: that La Roy Sunderland is the first man that ever dared to speak to me in that manner." Sunderland, using every atom of his strength, almost screamed in reply, "I thank God, sir, that you have lived long enough to find one man who will tell you to your face what many others say of you behind your back!"<sup>1</sup>

The charge of slander was sustained by a small majority, but the only penalty inflicted was that he be required to publish the finding in "Zion's Watchman" without note or comment. He did so, inserting the words in display type, with deep mourning border around them. At this conference he withdrew from the traveling ministry by location.

While these proceedings were taking place in the North conventions equally excited were being held and resolutions correspondingly intense were being passed in the South both in church and state. In the condition of mind naturally induced by them the General Conference of 1840 assembled.

Just before that the Annual Conferences were asked to pass judgment on a change in the general rule on slavery proposed by the New England Conference, so that it

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph," p. 132.

should read, "the buying or selling or holding men, women, or children as slaves, except on purpose to free them." In the Genesee thirty voted for and sixty against; in the Pittsburg only five votes were given for it; and all other conferences outside of New England gave less than these two, and some none. The Michigan gave one affirmative vote; the Erie three. Antislavery memorials, signed by five hundred traveling preachers and more than ten thousand private members, were sent to the General Conference; but only one in seven of the twenty-eight Annual Conferences asked for antislavery action.

A memorial from New York City, signed by nearly twelve hundred abolitionists, roused much excitement. Orange Scott, contrary to the facts, was charged with fraud in connection with this memorial. Action was taken which caused dissatisfaction among the abolitionists. Silas Comfort, a member of the Missouri Conference, had appealed from a decision of that body, which had adjudged him guilty of maladministration for admitting the testimony of a colored member against a white. After a protracted debate, on the 17th of May the conference rejected a resolution confirming the decision of the Missouri Conference. The next day, on motion of Ignatius A. Few, an influential member of the Georgia Conference, by a vote of seventy-four to forty-six the conference passed this resolution: "*Resolved*, That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher among us to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons in any State where they are denied that privilege in trials at law."

Attempts were made subsequently to reconsider Few's resolution; but after various amendments and substitutes were offered a final vote was taken on a substitute offered by William A. Smith, of Virginia: "That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher among us to admit per-

sons of color to give testimony on the trial of white persons in any slave-holding State or Territory where they are denied that privilege in trials at law; *Provided*, that when an Annual Conference in any such State or Territory shall judge it expedient to admit of the introduction of such testimony within its bounds it shall be allowed to do so." This was lost by a tie vote of sixty-nine to sixty-nine.

Much unpleasantness of feeling having been aroused, Bishop Soule, on the 2d of June, offered the following resolutions, which were adopted by a vote of ninety-seven to twenty-seven:

"1. *Resolved*, That in the decision of this conference, in the case of the appeal of the Rev. Silas Comfort, it is not intended to express or imply that the testimony of colored persons against white persons in church trials is either expedient or justifiable in any of the slave-holding States or Territories where the civil laws prohibit such testimony in trials at law.

"2. *Resolved*, That it is not the intention of this conference, in the adoption of the resolution of the Rev. Ignatius A. Few, of Georgia, in regard to the admission of the testimony of colored persons, to prohibit such testimony in church trials in any of the States or Territories where it is the established usage of the church to admit it, and where, in the judgment of the constitutional judicatories of the church, such testimony may be admitted with safety to the peace of society and the best interests of all concerned.

"3. *Resolved*, That it is not the intention of this conference, in either of the above cases or in any action had by this body, to express or imply any distrust or want of confidence in the Christian piety or integrity of the numerous body of colored members under our pastoral care, to whom we are bound by the bonds of the gospel of Christ, and for whose spiritual and eternal interests, to-

gether with all our fellow-men of every color and in every relation and condition in life, we will never cease to labor."

The subject of slavery was also discussed in the "Answer of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church"<sup>1</sup> to a fraternal address from the British Wesleyan Conference. That document had specifically referred to the subject, and, while declining to advocate violent and ill-considered measures, it said, "We are, however, strongly and unequivocally of the opinion that it is at this time the paramount Christian duty of the ministers of our most merciful Lord in your country to maintain the *principle* of opposition to slavery with earnest zeal and unflinching firmness."

On this subject the Conference of 1840 said: "We have considered with affectionate respect and confidence your brotherly suggestions concerning slavery, and most cheerfully return an unreserved answer to them. And we do so the rather, brethren, because of the numerous prejudicial statements which have been put forth in certain quarters to the wounding of the church."

The conference denied that it had adopted any new principle or rule of Discipline, and affirmed that it did not mean to do so.

"Of these United States (to the government and laws of which, 'according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the Union and the constitutions of the several States,' we owe and delight to render a sincere and patriotic loyalty) there are several which do not allow of slavery. There are others in which it is allowed and there are slaves, but the tendency of the laws and the minds of the majority of the people are in favor of emancipation. But there are others in which slavery exists so universally, and is so closely interwoven with their civil institutions, that both do the laws disallow of

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference," 1840, p. 153.

emancipation, and the great body of the people (the source of laws with us) hold it to be treasonable to set forth anything by word or deed tending that way. Each one of all these States is independent of the rest and sovereign with respect to its internal government (as much so as if there existed no confederation among them for ends of common interest), and therefore it is impossible to frame a rule on slavery proper for our people in all the States alike. But our church is extended through all the States, and, as it would be wrong and unscriptural to enact a rule of discipline in opposition to the constitution and laws of the State on this subject, so also would it not be equitable or Scriptural to confound the positions of our ministers and people (so different as they are in different States) with respect to the moral question which slavery involves.

“ Under the administration of the venerable Dr. Coke this plain distinction was once overlooked, and it was attempted to urge emancipation in *all* the States; but the attempt proved almost ruinous and was soon abandoned by the doctor himself. While, therefore, the church has encouraged emancipation in those States where the laws permit it, and allowed the freedman to enjoy freedom, we have refrained, for conscience' sake, from all intermeddling with the subject in those other States where the laws make it criminal. And such a course we think agreeable to the Scriptures, and indicated by St. Paul's inspired instruction to servants in his First Epistle to the Corinthians vii. 20, 21. For if servants were not to care for their servitude when they *might not* be free, though if they might be free they should use it *rather*, so neither should masters be condemned for not setting them free when they *might not* do so, though *if* they *might* they should do so *rather*. The question of the evil of slavery, abstractly considered, you will readily perceive, brethren, is a very differ-

ent matter from a principle or rule of church discipline to be executed contrary to and in defiance of the law of the land. Methodism has always been (except, perhaps, in the single instance above) eminently loyal and promotive of good order; and so we desire it may ever continue to be both in Europe and America. With this sentiment we conclude the subject, adding only the corroborating language of your noble Missionary Society, by the revered and lamented Watson, in their instructions to missionaries, published in the report of 1833, as follows:

“‘As in the colonies in which you are called to labor a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your remembrance what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies: that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition.’”<sup>1</sup>

Another affair of importance was a remonstrance of thirty official members of the church in the Baltimore Conference against the action of that body in refusing to recommend for ordination certain local ministers who held slaves. The committee made a report occupying nearly six pages of the “Journal,” reviewing the whole subject, and offered a resolution, which was adopted:

“*Resolved* by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled, That, under the provisional exception of the general rule of the church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in States or Territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference,” 1840, pp. 155, 156.



barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to [the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination.”

Daniel Dorchester, presiding elder of the Springfield district of the New England Conference, in 1838 refused to allow a Quarterly Conference to pass antislavery resolutions, and abruptly adjourned it. A call was published in “Zion’s Herald” for a conference of laymen “to give a united and decided expression of opinion in relation to the oppressive course pursued by the presiding elder during the last year.” The convention was held, and a committee appointed to correspond with Bishop Waugh and request the removal of the elder. The committee complied with its instructions, and not only proposed the removal of Dorchester, but nominated several gentlemen who, in the opinion of the convention, would be acceptable and useful as president of the district. Waugh replied, admitting that “Zion mourned on the district” as represented by the brethren, but adding, “While I mourn on that account, I have no reason to believe that the causes of her desolation are to be found in either the talents, piety, or conduct of your presiding elder.” He thus closed:

“In the absence of all specific objection in your request for his removal (to say nothing of the anti-Methodist character of your convention, and without charging this irregularity to its true cause, which has also operated your mournful desolations), I must respectfully inform you that I do not see sufficient cause to remove Brother Dorchester from the Springfield district.

“Respectfully yours,

“B. WAUGH.”

He had presided at the preceding session of the New England Conference, and the following charge and specification had been presented against Dorchester:

*Charge.*—For exceeding the powers of his office.

*Specification.*—In peremptorily arresting the Quarterly Meeting Conference, on the evening of the thirteenth day of August last, in the midst of business which he had allowed them to commence; and for suddenly and unprecedentedly adjourning the conference contrary to the express wish of the great majority of the conference, thereby abridging them in the exercise of their privileges of an associated body.”

The conference declared the charge sustained, and censured Dorchester.

He appealed to the General Conference of 1840, and on the trial was heard without limitation of time. Four members of the delegation from the New England Conference, including Orange Scott, replied to him, and Joseph Holdich responded in his behalf. Bishop Andrew decided that the delegates from the New England Conference could not reply to Dorchester. An appeal was taken by a Southern delegate, but the decision of the chair was sustained.

At the close of the discussion the following resolution, moved by Ignatius A. Few, was adopted by a vote of one hundred and twenty yeas against seventeen nays: “*Resolved*, That the decision of the New England Conference of 1839, censuring the Rev. D. Dorchester and requiring him to pursue a different course in future, be, and the same hereby is, reversed.”<sup>1</sup>

The report on slavery was non-committal, and the conference would not allow a minority report to be presented. Scott was permitted, however, to oppose the adoption

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference,” 1840, pp. 47, 48.

of the report, and, his time being indefinitely extended, he occupied two hours. All accounts agree that he spoke with directness and courage, in a dignified and conciliatory manner.

William A. Smith, of the Virginia Conference, after saying that if slavery was a moral evil, Scott reasoned like a philosopher and ought not to be condemned, denied that it was such.

Scott was possessed of extraordinary forensic and general oratoric power. John G. Whittier, the poet of nature, philanthropy, abolitionism, and of the traditions of New England, gives an instance:

“We had listened with intense interest to the thrilling eloquence of George Thompson, and Henry B. Stanton had put forth one of his happiest efforts. A crowded assembly had been chained to their seats for hours. It was near ten o'clock in the evening. A pause ensued; the audience became unsettled, and many were moving toward the door purposing to retire. A new speaker arose. He was a plain-looking man, and seemed rather to hesitate in the few observations he first offered. An increasing disposition to listen evidently encouraged him, and he became animated and lively, eliciting demonstrations of applause. Spurred on by this, he continued with increasing interest evident on the part of his hearers, who now resigned themselves willingly to his powerful appeals, responding at short intervals in thunders of applause. To many his illustrations were new and startling. I never can forget the masterly manner in which he met the objection that abolitionists were blinded by prejudice and working in the dark. ‘Blind though we be,’ he remarked, ‘aye, sir, though blind as Samson in the temple of Dagon, like him, if we can do no more, we will grope our way along, feeling for the pillars of that temple which has been con-

secrated to the bloody rites of the Moloch Slavery; and, grasping their base, we will bend forward, nerved by the omnipotence of truth, and, o'erturning the supports on which this system of abomination rests, upheave the entire fabric, whose undistinguishable ruins shall yet mark the spot where our grandest moral victory was proudly won.' The climax was complete; the applause was unbounded as the speaker retired. Upon inquiry, we heard the name of O. Scott, now so well known among the ablest advocates of the slave's cause."<sup>1</sup>

The following "lame and impotent conclusion," equally distasteful to the North and to the South, was reached by the conference:

"Since the commencement of the present session of the General Conference memorials have been presented, principally from the Northern and Eastern divisions of the work, some praying for the action of the conference on the subject of slavery, and others asking for radical changes in the economy of the church. The results of the deliberations of the committees to whom these memorials had a respectful reference, and the final action of the conference upon them, may be seen among the doings of this body as reported and published. The issue in several instances is probably different from what the memorialists may have thought they had reason to expect. But it is to be hoped they will not suppose the General Conference has either denied them any legitimate right or been wanting in a proper respect for their opinions. Such is the diversity of habits of thought, manners, customs, and domestic relations among the people of this vast republic, and such the diversity of the institutions of the sovereign States of the confederacy, that it is not to be supposed an

<sup>1</sup> Lucius C. Matlack's "History of American Slavery and Methodism" (New York, 1849).

easy task to suit all the incidental circumstances of our economy to the views and feelings of the vast mass of minds interested. We pray, therefore, that brethren whose views may have been crossed by the acts of this conference will at least give us the credit of having acted in good faith, and of not having regarded private ends or party interests, but the best good of the whole family of American Methodists."

How unsatisfactory all these proceedings were to the abolitionists subsequent events made obvious.

On the 13th of May, 1841, a small connection, taking the name of Wesleyan Methodists, was formed in Michigan. In two years it reported 17 stationed preachers, 9 circuits, and 1116 members.<sup>1</sup>

Numerous individuals seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church and joined other denominations, while many withdrew, undetermined whether to form a new sect or remain disconnected from the visible church. Orange Scott, whose health had been impaired, spent a year or more in partial retirement at Newbury, Vt., but contributed articles to the press in which he questioned whether his past mode of conducting the antislavery controversy had been wise, and expressed doubts of the possibility of reforming the church until the state should move. In one of his essays he said that "there is no alternative but to submit to things pretty much as they are, or secede." He declared that he had never felt prepared to withdraw, but announced his opinion that those who could not conscientiously submit to Methodist economy and usages would do better to leave peaceably.

Matlack's "Life of Scott" furnishes evidence that various prominent men in the Methodist Episcopal Church urged the latter to prepare a plan of church government,

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph," p. 139.

call a convention, and secede, assuring him of their hearty coöperation.

Finally, in 1842, Scott, with Jotham Horton and La Roy Sunderland, announced their withdrawal in a paper then established, known as the "True Wesleyan," and called a convention of all who agreed with them to prepare for the organization of a church which should be non-episcopal and antislavery. Luther Lee, Cyrus Prindle, Edward Smith, W. H. Brewster, Marcus Swift, Lucius C. Matlack, and many others coalesced with them. A convention for organization was held May 31, 1843, at Utica, N. Y., and the Wesleyan Connection of America was formed. About six thousand adhered to them, including twenty-two from the traveling ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "and as many more from the Protestant and Reformed Methodists;" to these were added forty-four who reported by letter. These were divided into six Annual Conferences, and at the first General Conference, held eighteen months afterward, a total membership of fifteen thousand was reported.<sup>1</sup>

This church retained Quarterly, Annual, and General Conferences. Scott was in favor of a modified episcopacy, diocesan in character, with a limitation of time, and eligibility to reelection every four years. The general rule on slavery was changed so as to read, "Buying or selling of men, women, or children with the intention to enslave them, or holding them as slaves, or claiming that it is right so to do." The eighth Article of Religion held: "We are required to acknowledge God as our only Supreme Ruler, and all men are created by him equal in all natural rights. Wherefore all men are bound so to order all their individual and social and political acts as to render to God entire and absolute obedience, and to secure to all

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph," chap. xiii.

men the enjoyment of every natural right, as well as to promote the greatest happiness of each in the possession and exercise of such rights."

The House of Representatives of the legislature of Maryland, early in 1842, passed a resolution the tendency of which would be to drive from Maryland or reduce to bondage free negroes. The bill was entitled "An Act for the Better Security of Negro Slaves, and Promoting Industry and Honesty among the Free People of Color." Dr. Bond, who had written so vigorously and relentlessly against the abolitionists, and who was a native of that State, denounced the movement of the Slave-holders' Convention as "beyond the ordinary evil and wickedness of men," and exclaimed, "To our brethren we say, and to all who fear God we say, you are released. The Slave-holders' Convention has taken off your strait-jackets. The questions which we were told it was dangerous to discuss are now forced upon us by those who conjured us to be silent for the sake of mercy and humanity; and, with the blessing of God, we will discuss them to the heart's content of the Slave-holders' Convention."

The columns of the "Christian Advocate" were now opened editorially to the discussion of slavery. Bond discussed two questions: "Ought the General Conference to enact a rule of discipline by which all slave-holders, whatever be the peculiar circumstances of the case, shall be expelled from the communion of the church?" and "If it be admitted that there are circumstances which will justify a Methodist in holding slaves, then, whether it is possible to make a rule which, while it will reach all others, shall spare those exempt cases." He maintained the negative, but allowed the Rev. Robert Boyd to publish two articles on the other side. In Bond's reply he expressed modified antislavery views. This led to severe criticism

of his attitude in the "Southern Advocate." It was also condemned by resolution in various Quarterly Conferences in Georgia and Alabama. To these he replied that extreme views on the Southern side were as dangerous to the common welfare as abolitionism; that the views then uttered in the South "would leave us without hope of a better state of things; for slavery must not only be endured, but purposely propagated:" adding that should the church require him to advocate or defend the opinion set forth in the resolutions from Georgia and Alabama, he would resign as editor; and should the church ever cease to testify against slavery as a moral evil, as he had defined that term, he should seek a purer community.<sup>1</sup>

Aroused to their danger by the threatened establishment of the Wesleyan Connection, the Methodist abolitionists of New England had begun to hold conventions. At a large one held in Boston, January 18, 1843, it was resolved that "slave-holding is sin; that every slaveholder is a sinner, and ought not to be admitted to the pulpit or the communion; that the Methodist Episcopal Church is responsible for slavery within its pale."

A convention held at Halowell, Me., declared that, "from a careful collection of documentary evidence, with other well-attested facts, there are within the Methodist Episcopal Church 200 traveling ministers holding 1600 slaves; about 1000 local preachers holding 10,000; and about 25,000 members holding 207,900 more."

A similar convention at Claremont, N. H., resolved that the "only way to prevent entire dissolution among us as a church is in an entire separation from the South."

<sup>1</sup> "Christian Advocate," vol. xviii. p. 10.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### BISECTION OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THE ninth delegated General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church assembled in the Green Street Church of the city of New York on Wednesday, May 1, 1844, Bishops Soule, Hedding, Andrew, Waugh, and Morris being present. Bishop Roberts had died March 26, 1843, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. Bishop Simpson, who knew him well, speaks of him as "one of the earth's purest and noblest sons."<sup>1</sup>

The conference convened under a sense of impending disaster, the more depressing because none could forecast its form. The episcopal address was read by Bishop Soule. It made no reference to slavery, but dwelt at length upon the missions among "people of color" in the Southern and Southwestern States, giving thanks to God that "the unhappy excitement which, for several years, spread a dark cloud over our prospects, and weakened our hands, and filled our hearts with grief, has died away and almost ceased to blast our labors." It condemned the treatment of the colored people in those parts of the church where slavery did not exist; pointing out that there were four Annual Conferences without a colored member; eight others had an aggregate number of 463, an average

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Roberts" ("Lives of Methodist Bishops").

of less than 60; and that in fifteen—almost half the conferences in the connection, and some of them among the largest in both ministry and membership—the total number of colored members was but 1309. The address continued: “In many of these conferences there is a numerous colored population, and in each of them a very considerable number.” It raised the question whether the freedom of the people of color within the bounds of these conferences could be urged as the cause of their not being gathered into the fold of Christ, alleging that such could not be the case, because “in the city of Baltimore alone there are nearly four times the number of colored people in the church that we find in the fifteen conferences referred to; and yet a vast majority of them are as free as they are in almost all of the States embraced in these conferences.”

If this was intended to divert the mind of the General Conference from the dangerous subject of slavery, it was not successful. Under the call for reports, petitions, and memorials, Bishop Andrew being in the chair, when the Providence Conference was reached Frederick Upham presented a memorial on that subject. Thereupon Collins, of Baltimore, moved a “committee, to be called the Committee on Slavery, to be constituted of one member from each Annual Conference.” Capers, of South Carolina, moved to lay this on the table, but the motion did not prevail, and the committee was ordered, Upham offering communications from six stations, and Benton, from the same conference, adding another; from eight stations in the New England Conference memorials were presented. A memorial of the Maine Annual Conference on the same subject was introduced, while from New Hampshire came distinct memorials and resolutions from thirty-eight cities and towns; western New York sent another; the Black River

Conference another; Pittsburg seventeen; North Ohio ten; Ohio one; and Rock River one. On the next day was presented a memorial from Philadelphia relating to the testimony of colored members, and during several days following sixty-six memorials were received; some relating to colored testimony, others to a change of the general rule, others to the appointment of slave-holders to the office of missionary secretary, or as missionaries under the direction of the parent board.

In the discussion on their reference to the Committee on Slavery, William A. Smith said he was sorry these memorials taught the lesson they did, that there were so many that were rabid on this subject. They of the South could get as many as they pleased of a contrary character, but they had thought proper not to offend the feelings of the conference by adopting such a course; or otherwise they could get them with strong arguments, and abounding with insulting epithets and degrading remarks calculated to arouse the feelings of the Eastern and Northern brethren; but they were above it, superior to it, and would scorn to stoop to so contemptible a method of defending their position. He affirmed that the Southern members had never had a fair hearing; that he had never known but one solitary instance in which they had been calmly and patiently heard, and that was when Dr. Capers addressed them. "They were assailed with cries of 'Order,' 'Your fifteen minutes are out,' though that had been extended again and again; and thus they were dogged into silence, and the true ground taken by the South had never been fully heard on the floor of that conference."

The appeal of Francis A. Harding, of the Baltimore Conference, was made the order of the day for Tuesday, May 7th. He had been suspended from his ministerial standing for refusing to manumit certain slaves that came

into his possession by marriage. From this he had appealed, William A. Smith appearing for him. The proceedings of the Baltimore Conference were read by the secretary. It was shown that the matter had been referred to a committee of five, which reported that Harding had become possessed of five slaves. The committee recommended that "WHEREAS, The Baltimore Conference cannot and will not tolerate slavery in any of its members, that Brother Harding be required to execute a deed of manumission, and have the same enrolled in a proper court, and give to this conference during the present session a pledge that this shall be done during the present year."

Harding stated that he could not comply, and the matter was referred to a committee, which reported that it could not induce him to do so. It was then resolved "that Brother Harding be suspended until the next Annual Conference, or until he shall assure the episcopacy that he has taken the necessary steps to secure the freedom of his slaves."

The General Conference voted to admit the appeal. Smith began his plea by declaring himself to be an anti-slavery man, but not an abolitionist in any sense of the word. He then furnished evidence that it was impossible for Harding to either sell or liberate these slaves; that neither he nor his wife, conjointly or separately, could manumit them by deed or otherwise. In the course of his very able speech, he quoted Judge Key upon the laws of Maryland, and also said, "Now we of the South take both sides of the question: slavery is a great evil; it is not necessarily a sin."

Collins impeached the correctness of Judge Key's representation. He proved that Blake, one of those accused before the Annual Conference, had manumitted his boy in compliance with the rule of the conference; maintained that

the Discipline had been violated by Harding; that he entered into this difficulty voluntarily with his eyes open; that by becoming a slave-holder he rendered himself unavailable to the Baltimore Conference as a traveling preacher, and had violated the position which the Baltimore Conference had always taken.

After others had participated Collins by consent of his opponent supplemented his former remarks, and Smith made an elaborate reply. At the close of the discussion Early, of the Virginia Conference, moved that the decision be reversed. When the final vote was counted there were one hundred and seventeen nays and fifty-six yeas, and Bishop Morris announced that the decision of the Baltimore Conference was affirmed. Capers took an appeal, but the chair was sustained by a vote of one hundred and eleven to fifty-three.

The division was portentous. But two votes from Southern States were cast in favor of affirming the decision of the Baltimore Conference, one from Texas and the other from Missouri. Among the fifty-six who voted to reverse the action of the Baltimore Conference were one from the Rock River and three from Illinois, including the famous Peter Akers. The Philadelphia Conference divided, three voting to reverse and two to sustain. The New Jersey divided, three voting to sustain, two to reverse. But the New York, New England, Providence, Maine, New Hampshire, Troy, Black River, Oneida, Genesee, Erie, Pittsburg, Ohio, North Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Baltimore voted unanimously to sustain the action of the Baltimore Conference; and the Kentucky, Holston, Tennessee, Memphis, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, South Carolina, and North Carolina voted unanimously the other way, with three of the four from Missouri, and one of the two from Texas.

Collins presented the following preamble and resolution on the 20th of May :

“WHEREAS, It is currently reported and generally understood that one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church has become connected with slavery ; and WHEREAS, It is due to the General Conference to have a proper understanding of the matter ; therefore,

“ *Resolved*, That the Committee on the Episcopacy be instructed to ascertain the facts in the case, and report the result of their investigation to this body to-morrow morning.”

On the 22d of May, Report No. 3 of the Committee on Episcopacy was read :

“ The Committee on Episcopacy, to whom was referred a resolution, submitted yesterday, instructing them to inquire whether any one of the superintendents is connected with slavery, beg leave to present the following as their report on the subject.

“ The committee had ascertained previous to the reference of the resolution that Bishop Andrew is connected with slavery, and had obtained an interview with him on the subject ; and, having requested him to state the whole facts in the premises, hereby present a written communication from him in relation to this matter, and beg leave to offer it as his statement and explanation of the case.

“ *To the Committee on Episcopacy.*

“ DEAR BRETHREN : In reply to your inquiry, I submit the following statement of all the facts bearing on my connection with slavery. Several years since an old lady of Augusta, Ga., bequeathed to me a mulatto girl, in trust that I should take care of her until she should be nineteen years of age ; that *with her consent* I should then send her

to Liberia; and that, in case of her refusal, I should keep her and make her as free as the laws of the State of Georgia would permit. When the time arrived she refused to go to Liberia, and of her own choice remains *legally* my slave, although I derive no pecuniary profit from her. She continues to live in her own house on my lot, and has been and is at present at perfect liberty to go to a free State at her pleasure; but the laws of the State will not permit her emancipation, nor admit such deed of emancipation to record, and she refuses to leave the State. In her case, therefore, I have been made a slave-holder legally, but not with my own consent.

“Secondly. About five years since the mother of my former wife left to her daughter, *not to me*, a negro boy; and, as my wife died without a will more than two years since, by the laws of the State he becomes legally my property. In this case, as in the former, emancipation is impracticable in the State; but he shall be at liberty to leave the State whenever I shall be satisfied that he is prepared to provide for himself, or I can have sufficient security that he will be protected and provided for in the place to which he may go.

“Thirdly. In the month of January last I married my present wife, she being at the time possessed of slaves, inherited from her former husband's estate, and belonging to *her*. Shortly after my marriage, being unwilling to become their owner, regarding them as strictly hers, and the law not permitting their emancipation, I secured them to her by a deed of trust.

“It will be obvious to you, from the above statement of facts, that I have neither bought nor sold a slave; that in the only two instances in which I am legally a slave-holder emancipation is impracticable. As to the servants owned by my wife, I have no legal responsibility in the

premises, nor could my wife emancipate them if she desired to do so. I have thus plainly stated all the facts in the case, and submit the statement for the consideration of the General Conference.

“ ‘Yours respectfully,

“ ‘JAMES O. ANDREW.’

“ All of which is respectfully submitted.

“ ROBERT PAINE, *Chairman.*”

Griffith, seconded by Davis, both of the Baltimore Conference, offered the following preamble and resolution :

“ WHEREAS, The Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has become connected with slavery, as communicated in his statement in his reply to the inquiry of the Committee on the Episcopacy, which reply is embodied in their Report No. 3, offered yesterday ; and WHEREAS, It has been, from the origin of said church, a settled policy and the invariable usage to elect no person to the office of bishop who was embarrassed with this ‘ great evil,’ as under such circumstances it would be impossible for a bishop to exercise the functions and perform the duties assigned to a general superintendent with acceptance in that large portion of his charge in which slavery does not exist ; and WHEREAS, Bishop Andrew was himself nominated by our brethren of the slave-holding States, and elected by the General Conference of 1832, as a candidate who, though living in the midst of a slave-holding population, was nevertheless free from all personal connection with slavery ; and WHEREAS, This is, of all periods in our history as a church, the one least favorable to such an innovation upon the practice and usage of Methodism as to confide a part of the itinerant general superintendency to a slave-holder ; therefore,



“*Resolved*, That the Rev. James O. Andrew be, and he is hereby, affectionately requested to resign his office as one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”<sup>1</sup>

Collins moved that the report be laid on the table, to be taken up the next day, as a meeting of the Northern delegates was to be held at four that afternoon, to which he invited any of the Southern brethren who might wish to attend. Capers said this was not an announcement in order, but he would take the opportunity to announce that there would be a meeting of the Southern delegates at three o'clock.

The chairman then read a paper which had been brought to the table:

“*To the President.*

“REV. AND DEAR SIR: A report has been in circulation for some days which is thought to have a very unhappy effect on this conference. The report is that a plan has been formed by Northern members of the conference to force the South into secession, and I have been given as authority for this statement. So far as I am concerned, the allegation is wholly and unqualifiedly untrue. I propose, with your permission, to contradict it with a view to promote peace.

“Yours truly,

“THOMAS E. BOND.”

Bond disclaimed all knowledge of such a plan. Schon, of Ohio, disavowed for himself and the section which he represented all connection; Bangs, of New York, followed in a similar strain; and Smith, of Virginia, denied

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference of 1844,” pp. 63, 64.

that he was personally implicated in any allusions which had been made.

In speaking in favor of his resolution, Griffith made the point that Andrew had by a voluntary choice placed himself in a position to embarrass himself by circumstances that rendered it impracticable to discharge the duties assigned to him; that this was a disqualification and sufficient ground to ask him to resign.

The preamble of the resolution was changed without altering the sense, and at this point Bishop Soule made an address. He declared himself willing to be immolated, exclaiming, "I can be immolated only on one altar, and that is the altar of the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. You cannot, all the powers of earth cannot, immolate me upon a Northern altar or a Southern altar." He reminded the body that they were before several tribunals: the galleries, the Christian churches of our own land, the whole body of ministers and people in the Methodist Episcopal Church, public opinion, statesmen, civilians, and jurists. He besought them to deliver their arguments in soft words, implored them not to raise their voices so as to be heard in the street, and to avoid all reflection upon one another.

Sandford, of New York, assumed the right of the conference to make this request of Andrew to resign, and confined himself to the discussion of the expediency. Winans, of Mississippi, referring to the request of the senior bishop to be calm, said that he was calm, even if it was "the calmness of despair." He admitted that he was "not prepared to deny that the conference had an abstract right, with or without cause, to request any member of that body to retire from the episcopacy," or that any member had the right to argue in favor of the propriety of such a request. He said that in 1832 a slave-

holder would have been elected to the office of bishop had it not been for the management and trickery of certain members of the Baltimore Conference, and charged that Pickering, of New England, nominated a man to the office who was known to be a slave-holder. Pickering rose to deny it.

Winans said, "I say that by this vote you will render it indispensably, uncontrollably necessary that that portion of the church should—I dread to pronounce the word, but you understand me. Yes, sir; you create an uncontrollable necessity that there should be a disconnection of that large portion of the church from your body. . . . If you pass this action in the mildest form in which you can approach the bishop, you will throw every minister in the South *hors de combat*; you will cut us off from all connection with masters and servants, and will leave us no option—God is my witness that I speak with all sincerity of purpose toward you—but to be disconnected with your body."

Bowen, of the Oneida Conference, made a brief speech in favor of the resolution.

Lovick Pierce indorsed Winans. This venerable man exclaimed, "There is but one man older than myself in the land I live in who is now in the ministry, and he is at present an inefficient man. I never wedded my heart to my family with less desires that this wedlock should be ruptured, than I did to the church which found me a sinner and, I hope, through God's grace will land me in heaven." He declared that no question had ever done so much harm in the South as the intermeddling of the Methodist Episcopal Church with slavery, and exclaimed, "Could the cap of hell be lifted to-day, I fear that the groans of many damned would be heard coming up, and dating the ground of their fall from the merciless act of

the church against a free constitution and the laws of the land." He pronounced against the resolution.

Berryman, of Missouri, opposed it on the ground that it had no sanction in the Discipline.

Coleman, of Troy, would vote for it, but would not wish to be considered an enemy to his Southern brethren. He had opposed abolitionism from the foundation, but thought that the step taken by Bishop Andrew was "wonderfully unfortunate."

Smith, of Virginia, corrected Coleman concerning his views of what he (Coleman) and others had done in behalf of the Southern brethren by fighting abolitionism.

Stringfield, of Holston, opposed the resolution on the ground of indirection, and on the further ground that it was inexpedient, "for if Bishop Andrew be shuffled out of office, some one must be elected to fill his place, and, whoever he might be, he would meet with as little favor in the South as Andrew would, with all his disabilities, in the North."

Crowder, of Virginia, endeavored to show that no good result could follow from the resignation of Bishop Andrew, and solemnly predicted that "the division of our church might follow, a civil division of this great confederacy may follow that, and then hearts will be torn apart, master and slave arrayed against each other, brother in the church against brother, and the North against the South; and when thus arrayed, with the fiercest passions and energies of our nature brought into action against each other, civil war and far-reaching desolation must be the final results. My brethren, are you prepared for this? No; I am sure you are not. Then refuse to pass the resolution now pending."

Spencer, of Pittsburg, replied to the argument that the present action was novel by saying that the *situation* was

novel; he would expose by an illustration the pretense that the bishop ought not to be asked to resign merely because there was no rule for it in the Discipline: "Suppose that, instead of marrying a respectable lady owning slaves, Bishop Andrew had married a colored woman. Would Southern or Northern brethren say either that he had broken an express rule of Discipline or that he would nevertheless be well qualified for a bishop in our church? Neither the one nor the other. They doubtless would depose him at once, though there is no rule to be found declaring in so many words that no white man shall marry a colored woman on pain of degradation."

Nathan Bangs replied to Winans, declaring that he never heard from any Northern man that he was willing to vote for a slave-holding bishop; that he was never in a caucus to nominate bishops, but he had heard from the mover of this resolution that, in 1832, the Baltimore Conference sent a committee to wait on a slave-holder from the South and ask him "if he was willing to emancipate his slaves if they would nominate him. He very courteously and in a Christian spirit took time to deliberate, and eventually told them he could not do it, and that was the reason why they declined to nominate him. Did that look like nominating a slave-holder to the episcopacy? And they nominated James O. Andrew because he was not a slave-holder." Bangs said that anything that would disqualify a man for the office of bishop was fit ground for the action of that conference; that he would say that "if any man said that every man who holds a slave sins in so doing, that would be a disqualification, and also to enter upon the possession of slaves would unfit a man for it." He affirmed that he did not touch the moral character of Andrew at all, but that he had acted imprudently and therefore should resign.

Capers rose and denied distinctly what Bangs had said, and claimed the right to refer to it when he should speak. He explained that no one had ever proposed to him to emancipate his slaves, but that he was urged to accept this appointment, and mentioned his circumstances with regard to slavery; that he had constantly opposed the use of his name and favored Bishop Andrew.

Winans asked Davis, of Baltimore, if it was not within his knowledge that for several months before the General Conference of 1832 arrangements were being made to secure the election of a Southern non-slave-holding man. Davis declared it was the first time he ever heard of it. Winans thought he could present twenty witnesses to prove the affirmation. Various other personal explanations were given, until Bishop Soule respectfully advised the brethren not to refer to individual words or private transactions.

J. B. Finley and J. M. Trimble, of Ohio, moved as a substitute for the resolutions the following:

“WHEREAS, The Discipline of our church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and WHEREAS, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains.”

Stephen Olin addressed the conference upon this substitute. After considering the subject generally he said, “If ever there was a man worthy to fill the episcopal office by his disinterestedness, his love of the church, his ardent,

melting sympathy for all the interests of humanity, but, above all, for his uncompromising and unreserved advocacy of the interest of the slave—if these are qualifications for the office of a bishop, then James O. Andrew is preëminently fitted to hold that office. . . . If I had a hundred votes, and Bishop Andrew were not embarrassed by these difficulties, . . . he is the man to whom I would give them all.” He discussed the whole subject and argued in favor of the substitute as a constitutional measure, dishonorable to no one, unjust to no one, and that it should be adopted and sent forth with the solemn declaration of the conference that it was not designed as a punishment or a censure, but merely as a prudential and expedient measure, calculated to avert great evils.

Drake, of Mississippi, commended the spirit of Olin, but maintained that in no vital principle did the substitute differ from the original resolution, though in the preamble he thought it preferable. He then suggested a resolution that :

“WHEREAS, There have been found difficulties of a serious nature in the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church exercising a general superintendency ; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That the General Conference recommend to the episcopacy to assign to each superintendent his sphere of labor for the next four years.”

Slicer, of Baltimore, supported the Finley and Trimble substitute as milder than the original resolution.

Crandall, of New England, said that he would have voted for the substitute but for the unfortunate speeches that had been made. He did not agree with Olin that the Southern brethren had a constitutional right to hold slaves. Olin subsequently said that he used the term “constitution” to mean the whole Discipline.

Cass, of New Hampshire, delivered a radical speech in

favor of abolitionism; quoted Wesley thus: "Man-buyers are exactly on a level with man-stealers. But perhaps you will say, I do not buy any negroes; I only use those left me by my father. So far very good. But is it enough to satisfy your conscience? . . . I strike at the root of this complicated villainy. I absolutely deny all slave-holding to be consistent with any degree of justice."

At this point he was interrupted by a vote giving Early liberty to speak after he finished. The admission of this interruption and vote Cass declared to be "contrary to all rule and order." The hour having arrived, conference adjourned, Cass having the floor. The next day, on the resumption of the debate, he was recognized by the president, but he said that he had been interrupted in his speech the day before, and his rights had been trampled upon, and he had no further speech to make.

Whereupon George F. Pierce, of Georgia, took the floor. He charged the other side with practicing legerdemain; "that is, they stated abstract propositions of right which no man will pretend to deny, and then decided elaborate argumentations, and made them to bear on conclusions with which these conclusions have no more to do than the law of the tides has with the polar star." He denied that the argument of expediency had half the force assigned to it, and affirmed that whatever damage the passage of Andrew's character without censure, or laying the whole business on the table, might have with the New England conferences, he was not prepared to believe that any considerable damage would be done in the middle conferences. He charged that New Englanders were "well described by Paul as intermeddlers with other men's matters."

He predicted when the day of division should come—and from the present aspect of the case he believed it would—that "in ten years, perhaps less, there would not be one



shred of the distinctive characteristics of Methodism left within the conferences that depart from us. . . . The episcopacy would be given up, the presiding eldership given up, the itinerancy come to an end, and Congregationalism be the order of the day." He said that if the New England conferences were to secede, the rest would live in peace.

Longstreet followed, charging that the disturbance arose from the idea that the church was a body corporate, an ecclesiastical assembly, and that it had entered into special legislation, wholly unlike the few and simple rules of the early church.

After a noble introduction on general principles, he said, in the matter of slavery, "I have ever feared that you would begin to presume on your authority and power to operate reforms, not by the simple, blessed principles of the gospel, but by your ideas of what will best conduce to the general interests of Methodism. What is Methodism? If it be anything else than the pure gospel religion, let Methodism go upon the winds far from my sight. . . . Your rules about slavery have constituted you a high court of judicature of the country, and made you judges of all the statute laws of the States; and now, whether you are to decide these questions in the Annual or General Conferences, or whether the bishop himself has the prerogative of settling them, is not yet decided. . . . There is no bitterness in my heart toward the most uncompromising abolitionist in this assembly. It may be we are in fault. The truth is between us somewhere; let us see where it lies. . . . When Methodism first made its appearance among us, she found slavery overspreading the length and breadth of the land. She entered her protest against it, and in so doing she did more than our Saviour or any apostle ever did." He then made an inventory of the

various acts of legislation on the subject, and declared that the South, though not approving, had submitted. He describes Bishop Andrew as arriving at the conference and finding it in commotion concerning himself. "He is pained and agonized. He convenes the delegates from the slaveholding conferences, and, for the sake of peace, proposes to resign; but we, to a man, without a dissenting voice, declared to him that 'if he sought the peace of the church by that course, he would be disappointed of his object; for that his resignation to appease the clamor of the abolitionists would but spread general discontent through the whole South. We cannot lie down and see you deposed. If it has come to this, that being connected with slavery disqualifies you, we too are disqualified.'" He then turned to those who were advocating the resolutions he opposed, and said, "You have generally, as far as words go, treated him with kindness; but there is an eloquence in action, and a rebuke—a kind of rebuke and collateral argument that it requires no great depth of wisdom to understand, and beneath which I have seen our bishop cowering here during all the time, as one that scarcely has had the privilege to occupy a seat among you, and is necessarily, from his delicate position, for some days driven from among you. Do you expect of us that we shall bow in submission to all this, with no better pleas for these measures than you have set up? Are we not to be excused if, in the ardor of feeling, we sometimes utter words incautiously? Are we not to be excused if we do not weigh our thoughts in golden balances?"

This speech, entirely apart from its bearing on the question under consideration, is one of the ablest in the history of ecclesiastical debate. The reporter gives two pages and a half, and summarizes the rest. According to the account, he showed that the proposed action

must necessarily result in the separation of the North and South.

J. T. Peck replied to G. F. Pierce, point by point, dwelling particularly upon his statement that he wished New England might secede. He uttered a passage similar in the character of its references to Webster's famous defense of Massachusetts, exclaiming, "No, sir, we cannot part so easily with the pioneer land of the devoted and sainted Jesse Lee!" He closed in a persuasive strain: "Let the South go? No, sir, we cannot part with our brethren whom we love so well. True, we cannot compromise principle to save *them*—nor to save the East. . . . *We will not let them go* unless they tear themselves from our arms bedewed with the tears of affection. *Never! no, never!*"

Resuming the next day, he deprecated the remarks of Pierce with regard to a division, apologized for the warmth and emotion with which he had defended New England, but continued at some length in the same strain.

Pierce responded in a humorous vein.

Green, of Tennessee, deplored the remarks about division; said that he was not an orator, lawyer, professor, president of a college, nor a doctor, but simply a humble Methodist preacher. Nevertheless he claimed to understand the Methodist Discipline. He showed that it was an assumption that a slave-holder could not have been elected bishop in 1832; affirmed that we came within one vote of electing such at one time, and spoke long and forcefully, stating that he hung over McKendree in his dying hours, and snatched from his lips the motto, "All is well." He described McKendree as a diamond of the first water, and said that his robes were pure and clean as the mountain snow. Green informed the conference that McKendree had at one time determined to buy a black boy to wait upon

him, but was dissuaded from doing so by E. Bodie, Esq., of Tennessee, and himself, on the ground that "if he owned the boy he would not obey him more readily than if he belonged to another." He closed by declaring that in the South Bishop Andrew's name was enrolled above all Methodist names, and with respect to those who, though they said that he was no sinner and had violated no law, yet were striving to pass this resolution, he felt as though they said, "Here, take Bishop Andrew and crucify him, for I find no fault in him."

On Monday, May 27th, Hamline, of Ohio, took the floor to discuss two questions: Has the General Conference constitutional authority to pass this resolution? Is it appropriate and fitting that it should do so? He argued in support of the authority from the genius of Methodist policy on points which the most nearly resemble it, showing that, from the class-leader upward, amenability regards not only major but minor morals—not only vices but also improprieties of behavior. Second, he showed the superiority of the General Conference to the episcopacy, contending for its legislative and judicial functions, and then proceeding to its executive, affirming that these are supreme or all-controlling; that the General Conference is the foundation of all official, executive authority. He drew a distinction between the constitution of the church and that of the United States, and in concluding admitted that a minister could not be summarily removed from the ministry, but must have a trial in due form; that the episcopacy was an office and not an order, therefore a bishop could be summarily removed for an impropriety. Upon the subject of expediency he spoke but a few moments, showing the nature of a bishop's influence. Estimated by the clearness of its statements, the beauty and propriety of its language, close adherence to its many points, relevancy, and the effect

it produced, this address must be regarded as one of the most persuasive in the history of forensic debate. The report of it, however, contains indubitable evidence that it was printed from the author's manuscript, or from notes subsequently furnished by him, or had been thoroughly revised after delivery, which is not the case with a large majority of the speeches.

Comfort, of Oneida, spoke briefly, building an argument on the ground that under certain circumstances a bishop cannot exercise the episcopal office without the consent of the General Conference.

William A. Smith, of Virginia, devoted himself to proving that Andrew had not acted improperly and had not violated the settled policy of the church; that his present position was not a violation of good faith; that the constitutional feature of the episcopacy did not require Andrew to desist from the duties of his office; that the adoption of either the substitute or the original resolution would be proscriptive, that it would close the door of usefulness to a large portion of the colored population, and would necessitate a division of the church. He maintained that the General Conference had no right directly to evoke a separation, but that the subject should be sent back to the membership of the church, who must be consulted and whose voice must be regarded as an authoritative decision. He affirmed that this subject could be decided without any regard to a civil war. "Nothing can be more absurd. Christian nations cannot fall upon measures of this sort." Differences must be settled by negotiation.

At the close Hamline arose to correct Smith, and in so doing uttered a very important passage:

"I never said, as Brother Smith affirms, that the administrative powers of this conference are absolute. I said they were supreme. 'Absolute' means not bound. This

conference is bound in all its powers, whether legislative, judicial, or executive, by constitutional restrictions. 'Supreme' means that, while acting within its constitutional limits, its decisions are final and all-controlling."

Collins replied to Longstreet, Capers, and others, and submitted a compromise resolution :

"WHEREAS, The Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise; and WHEREAS, A large portion of our ministry and membership in many of the Annual Conferences are known to have been always opposed to the election of a slave-holding bishop, believing that such an event is in contravention of the Discipline, which contemplates the episcopacy as an 'itinerant general superintendency,' and calculated also to strengthen the bonds of slavery; and WHEREAS, The peace and unity of the church in the non-slave-holding conferences will be liable to serious interruption from the connection of Bishop Andrew with slavery, without some definite action of the General Conference in relation to it; therefore,

" 1. *Resolved*, That the members of this General Conference are constrained to express their profound regret that Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the general superintendents, has become connected with slavery, in view of the fact that while thus circumstanced he cannot perform the duties of his office acceptably to a large portion of the ministers and members of our church.

" 2. *Resolved*, That Bishop Andrew be, and he hereby is, affectionately and earnestly requested to take the necessary measures to free himself from connection with slavery at the earliest period practicable within the ensuing four years.

" 3. *Resolved*, That all the matter pertaining to the appeal

of Rev. Silas Comfort, tried at the session of the General Conference in 1840, be erased from the Journal."

After this Bishop Andrew, under powerful emotion, delivered an address.

He spoke of his feelings during the trial, which had lasted more than a week, and said that, though he had "felt, and felt deeply," he was "not offended with any man"; and did "not quarrel with his abolition brethren," though believing "their opinions to be erroneous and mischievous." He gave an account of the circumstances of his election, stating that he objected to permit himself to be put in nomination for the office, which had no charms for him, as he was in a conference which he loved, and had nothing to gain by separation from a happy home. But on "being urged, in the interest of the peace of the church and of the prosperity of Methodism in the South," he "consented, with the hope of failure." He was never asked if he was a slave-holder, nor what his principles were upon the subject. "No one dared to ask of him a pledge in this matter, or it would have been met as it deserved." He took office upon the law of the church as contained in the book of Discipline; and said, "I believe my case is covered by it. It was known that I was to reside in the South; I was elected in view of that very thing. . . . Well, what was I to do, then? I was elected in a country where free persons could not be obtained for hire; and I could not do the work of the family—my wife could not do it. I was compelled to hire slaves and pay their masters, but had to change them every year because they were bad servants, having no interest in me or mine. I believe it would have been less sin before God to have bought a servant who would have taken an interest in me and I in him; but I did not do so. At length, however, I came into the

possession of slaves; and I am a slave-holder, . . . and I cannot help myself." He gave an account of his second marriage and the manner in which he came into the possession of slaves, and proceeded, "Sir, I have no pledge to make. It has been said I did this thing voluntarily and with my eyes open. I did so deliberately and in the fear of God, and God has blessed our union." He showed why he would not deed those slaves to his wife before marriage, or let his wife make them over to her children. "Sir," said he, "my conscience would not allow me to do this thing. If I had done so, and those negroes should have passed into the hands of those who would treat them unkindly, I should have been unhappy. Strange as it may seem to brethren, I am a slave-holder for conscience' sake." His wife would consent to manumit them if he deemed it proper, but how could he free them? Some were too old to support themselves, and only an expense, and some were little children. "Perhaps I shall be permitted to keep these; but then, if the others go, how shall I provide for these helpless ones? . . . Besides, many of them would not go—they love their mistress, and could not be induced to leave her. Sir, an aged and respectable minister, several years ago, when I had stated just such a case to him and asked him what he would do, said, 'I would set them free; I'd wash my hands of them, and if they went to the devil I'd be clear of them.' Sir, into such views of religion or philanthropy my soul cannot enter. I believe the providence of God has thrown these creatures into my hands, and holds me responsible for their proper treatment. . . . What can I do? I have no confession to make; I intend to make none. I stand upon the broad ground of the Discipline on which I took office, and if I have done wrong, put me out." He charged that the editor of the "Christian Ad-



vocate" had made him "the scapegoat of all the difficulties which abolition excitement had gotten up in the North." He affirmed that he had spent his life for the benefit of the slaves, and inquired if he was to be sacrificed for those who had done little or nothing for them; expressed doubts whether he would be unacceptable anywhere, except in some limited parts of the North; in the South he believed he was acceptable; and that he would not be unacceptable to one half the connection, if the conference thought proper to pass him. There was plenty of ground where he could labor acceptably and usefully. His closing words were: "The conference can take its course; but I protest against the proposed action as a violation of the laws of the Discipline, and an invasion of the rights secured to me by that book. Yet, let the conference take the steps they contemplate; I enter no plea for mercy, I make no appeal for sympathy; indeed, I love those who sympathize with me, but I do not want it now. I wish you to act coolly and deliberately, and in the fear of God; but I would rather that the conference should change the issue, and make the resolution to depose the bishop, and take the question at once; for I am tired of it. The country is becoming agitated upon the subject, and I hope the conference will act forthwith upon the resolution."

Finley followed in defense of his substitute, and said, "Was Bishop Andrew involved in these circumstances when he was elected to that office? *No, sir*; no man here will say he was. And could he have been elected to that office if he had been? *No, sir*; no man here will assert that he could. . . . This voluntary act has thrown this great body of ministers, and the whole church, into this tremendous state of agitation, of which he could now relieve us, if he would, by his resignation." He pointed out

that his resolution was modified to the most easy requirement it could be to meet the feeling of Southern brethren and cover the principle; "and from this ground I will not be moved; on this ground will I stand till I die." He maintained the right and the power of the General Conference to remove from office one or all of the bishops if, from any circumstance, they became disqualified to carry out the great principle of the itinerant general superintendency. He demanded whether the Methodist Episcopal Church would admit the great evil of slavery into the itinerant general superintendency. He denied that the Discipline was conservative toward slavery. He avowed that he was not a radico-abolitionist; that those rabid abolitionists called him a pro-slavery man; but "I treat it with the disregard that I did the taunt of the Southerners that I was an abolitionist."

Sehon, of Ohio, opposed the proposed measure. He said that he was peculiarly and delicately situated. His own aged and venerable father was a slave-holder; he himself was born and reared in Virginia, and early in his ministry was transferred to the free State Ohio, where he wished to live and die; that he was a practical abolitionist, and had emancipated perhaps as many slaves as any brother on the floor of the conference, but that he now had serious doubts, though he acted from principles of justice and humanity in freeing them, as to whether he had truly improved their condition. He doubted the wisdom, on a mere question of expediency, of proceeding in this summary manner to depose a bishop.

Winans, of Mississippi, in feeble health, rose to reply to Hamline, especially on his doctrine concerning the administrative powers of the General Conference. He would not concede that it had power to suspend, depose, or reprove a bishop. It was shut up to expulsion; other powers were

mere inferences, and "such were always dangerous, hazardous, ruinous." He turned his attention to Collins, and denied that discontent was a reason for a bishop's being set aside or asked to resign. He reasserted that a slave-holder came within one vote of being elected to the office of bishop, and, in 1832, a slave-holder received forty non-slave-holding votes, and if he had received fifty perhaps would have been elected bishop. He declared that from time immemorial slave-holders had been making concessions; "the interests of the South had been cramped more and more, from General Conference to General Conference. . . . It was their principle to yield to the utmost extent rather than give over the unity of the church." He referred with feeling to his connection with the Baltimore Conference in his early days, but said that "when *they* took him by the beard to kiss him, and then plunged a poisoned dagger into his breast, he must say it was too bad; it was the unkindest cut of all, and he could not help exclaiming, '*Et tu, Brute!*'"

Peter Cartwright delivered a characteristic speech, beginning with his experience, which dated from 1805, when he joined the Western Conference, and said that every Methodist preacher whom he ever knew opposed slavery from stem to stern; that, through all the squabbles and difficulties among which the church waded, there was not to be found among Methodist preachers an advocate of slavery. He would not turn politician, nor give his political opinions; if he did they would be different from those of the brother from Virginia. He thought "it would be a deplorable fix if we had no power to touch a bishop if he becomes unacceptable and unprofitable." He "never was a great favorite with the bishops," but he "liked them"; they had always treated him better than he deserved, "considering me as Peter Cartwright." He

had received appointments from Asbury and Whatcoat, and never had anything against Andrew. "It is all humbug that if a man inherit slaves he can do nothing with them. I so became the owner and shouldered my responsibility, resolved to be, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion, took them to my State, set them free, gave them land and built them a house, and they made more money than ever I did by my preaching. . . . Talk of division! I hope we shall hear no more of this sickly talk. I do not believe in a division and have not from the first. Why, this Methodist Episcopal Church would not miss me any more than an ox would miss a fly off his horn." Replying to the brother who said that Bishop McKendree wanted to purchase a slave, he said, "Now I have only to say that I have heard him say five hundred times that if he owned a thousand slaves he would not die a slave-holder; he would set them free. This doctrine he taught me when I was a beardless boy and when I was a presiding elder."

An attempt was made to order the previous question to be taken that day at 5:30. Capers stated that there were others who wished to speak, among them a venerable friend from South Carolina; that he also wished to give his testimony, but could not scuffle for the floor, and had been pained and grieved by seeing a dozen claiming it at once.

After consultation among the bishops it was decided that the motion for the previous question was out of order. Stamper, of Illinois, opposed the substitute as extra-judicial.

A long discussion took place the next day on the adoption of a rule making the previous question possible, and it finally prevailed.

Dunwody, of South Carolina, who had been a member of eight General Conferences, opposed the resolution on the ground of unscripturalness, unconstitutionality, and

mischievousness, and reviewed the subject of slavery with all the questions involved.

Soule rose, declaring himself calm, "but not with the calm that precedes the tempest and the storm, nor the calm of indifference, but of conviction." He would involve no man in responsibility, but would speak for himself. He read an extract from the address of the general superintendents at the Conference of 1840, and added:

"I wish to say explicitly that if the superintendents are only to be regarded as the officers of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and consequently as officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church liable to be deposed at will by a simple majority of this body without a form of trial, no obligation existing, growing out of the constitution and laws of the church, even to assign cause wherefore—I say, if this doctrine be a correct one, everything I have to say hereafter is powerless and falls to the ground. But brethren will permit me to say, strange as it may seem, although I have had the honor and the privilege to be a member of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever since its present organization, though I was honored with a seat in the convention of ministers which organized it, in this respect I have heard for the first time, either on the floor of this conference, in an Annual Conference, or through the whole of the private membership of the church, this doctrine advanced; this is the first time I ever heard it. Of course it struck me as a novelty. I am not going to enter the arena of controversy with this conference. I desire that my position may be defined. I desire to understand my landmarks as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church—not the bishop of the General Conference, not the bishop of any Annual Conference. I thought that the constitution of the church, I thought that its laws and regulations, I

thought that the many solemn vows of ordination, the parchment which I hold under the signatures of the departed dead—I thought that these had defined my landmarks; I thought that these had prescribed my duties; I thought that these had marked out my course.”

After proceeding at considerable length he said:

“ The adoption of that resolution deposes Bishop Andrew without form or trial; such is my deliberate opinion. I do not believe it is safe for our community; I do not believe it is safe for you; and I am out of this question. What shall be done? The question, I know, wakes up the attention of every brother. Can it be possible that the Methodist Episcopal Church is in such a state of excitement—in such a state, I had almost said, of revolution—as to be unprepared to send out the plain, simple facts in the case to the churches, to the Annual Conferences, everywhere through our community, and waive all action on this subject until another General Conference? . . . I am about to take my leave of you, brethren. You must know—you cannot but know—that, with the principles I have stated to you, with the avowal of my sentiments in regard to this subject, it will not be Bishop Andrew alone that your word will affect. No, sir; I implicate neither my colleagues on my right hand nor on my left; but I say the decision of the question cannot affect Bishop Andrew alone. I wish it to be distinctly understood, it *cannot affect him alone*. I mean specially in this point: I say that the resolution on which we are just about to act goes to sustain the doctrine that the General Conference have power and right to depose one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church without the form of trial—that you are under no obligation from the constitution or laws of the church to *show cause*, even. . . . It involves the office; it involves the charge; it involves the relation

itself. And now, in taking leave, I offer devout prayer to Almighty God that you may be directed wisely in the decision you are about to make. I have given to you what in my sober and deliberate judgment is the best and safest course which you can pursue—safest for all concerned. I want that opinion to have no more influence upon you than it justly deserves in the conferences—all the conferences. I thank the conference for the attention they have been pleased to give me. I thank the audience for their attention. I very well know—I am not at all unapprised—that the position I occupy, in which I stand on the principles of that resolution, on the principles involved in it, may seal my fate. I say I am not at all unapprised of that. Let me go; but I pray you hold to principles—to principles; and with these remarks I submit the whole to your and to God's direction."

In the afternoon Durbin addressed the conference. He justified on the ground of necessity the concessions made by the fathers on the subject of slavery. Without them the Methodist Episcopal Church could not have existed at all in the South. "This," he affirmed, "should be a rebuke to our abolition brethren everywhere who would urge this question to extremities." But he assumed that the people of the North, whatever their differences, were united in mind, heart, and feeling on this one point at least, "that the episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church *ought not to be trammelled with slavery.*" He argued strenuously for the right of the General Conference to suspend Bishop Andrew, and warmly denied that the substitute was equivalent to deposing him. Referring to Bishop Soule, he said, "Oh, sir, when we were left to infer this morning from the remarks of the chair that the passage of this substitute would affect not only Bishop Andrew, but perhaps others of our bishops, I could not but feel

that a momentary cloud gathered before my eyes to dim the clearness of my vision. The feelings which that remark excited were not calculated to give greater freedom to the action of my reason or greater precision to my judgment. But, strong as were and are those feelings, they cannot stifle my conscience or darken my understanding."

The debate the next day began with an address by Capers. He took issue with Durbin upon the proposition of the latter that the history of legislation in the church was a constant concession from the North to the South, pointing out the fact that during a portion of the time covered by Dr. Durbin there was on the subject of slavery no North nor South. "In those times slavery existed by general consent, and even the atrocious slave-trade was carried on both by men of Old England and New England." The action of the church was neither Southern nor Northern then, but such as was deemed admissible in the state of the laws where the church existed. He drew a distinction between the proposition that the conference had full power to put a bishop out of office for cause and the proposition that it could reduce a bishop to a mere General Conference officer and depose him at will, with or without some crime alleged. "What would be thought of a bishop by election who without consecration should assume the functions of the episcopacy as if he had been ordained?" He defined the constitution as that law of the church by which the governing power is limited, and from every possible definition of the term called in question the constitutionality of the measure before them. "It is not Protestant. It is inconsistent with the great object for which the church has been constituted," and closed by declaring that such a resolution would cut them off from the privilege of laboring with the colored people for their salvation.



After George Peck had spoken for a brief period, on motion of Stephen Olin the case of Bishop Andrew was deferred until the next morning in the hope that some compromise might be reached.

The next day Bishop Waugh read to the conference an important communication from the bishops:

“REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN: The undersigned respectfully and affectionately offer to your calm consideration the result of their consultation this afternoon in regard to the unpleasant and very delicate question which has been so long and so earnestly debated before your body. They have with the liveliest interest watched the progress of the discussion, and have awaited its termination with the deepest solicitude. As they have pored over this subject with anxious thought by day and by night, they have been more and more impressed with the difficulties connected therewith and the disastrous results which, in their apprehension, are the almost inevitable consequences of present action on the question now pending before you. To the undersigned it is fully apparent that a decision thereon, whether affirmatively or negatively, will most extensively disturb the peace and harmony of that widely extended brotherhood which has so effectively operated for good in the United States of America and elsewhere during the last sixty years in the development of a system of active energy of which union has always been a main element. They have with deep emotion inquired, Can anything be done to avoid an evil so much deprecated by every friend of our common Methodism? Long and anxiously have they waited for a satisfactory answer to this inquiry, but they have paused in vain. At this painful crisis they have unanimously concurred in the propriety of recommending the postponement of further

action in the case of Bishop Andrew until the ensuing General Conference. It does not enter into the design of the undersigned to argue the propriety of their recommendation; otherwise strong and valid reasons might be adduced in its support. They cannot but think that if the embarrassment of Bishop Andrew should not cease before that time the next General Conference, representing the pastors, ministers, and people of the several Annual Conferences, after all the facts in the case shall have passed in review before them, will be better qualified than the present General Conference can be to adjudicate the case wisely and discreetly. Until the cessation of the embarrassment, or the expiration of the interval between the present and the ensuing General Conference, the undersigned believe that such a division of the work of the general superintendency might be made, without any infraction of a constitutional principle, as would fully employ Bishop Andrew in those sections of the church in which his presence and services would be welcome and cordial. If the course pursued on this occasion by the undersigned be deemed a novel one, they persuade themselves that their justification, in the view of all candid and peace-loving persons, will be found in their strong desire to prevent disunion and to promote harmony in the church.

“ Very respectfully and affectionately submitted,

“ JOSHUA SOULE,

“ ELIJAH HEDDING,

“ B. WAUGH,

“ T. A. MORRIS.”

This communication was referred to a committee.

Hedding, on Saturday morning, desired to withdraw his signature. He had signed it as a peace measure, believing that it would be generally acceptable to the conference,

but in both these expectations he was disappointed. Waugh wished his name to remain, as he had signed it in the hope that it would contribute to the preservation of the church. Morris wished his name to remain as a testimony that he had done what he could to preserve the union of the body. Soule wished his name to go forth through a thousand channels to the world. It was already before the American people, and he "might not and would not withdraw it."

Nathan Bangs moved that the communication lie on the table. The roll was called, and the motion prevailed by a majority of twelve.

After debate the order of the day was taken up, whereupon Soule asked if the resolution was mandatory; if it was he looked upon it as suspending Andrew. There was a great difference between suspension and advice; if this was mandatory it was judicial. One brother had said that if the resolution passed Andrew was still a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; if this was the case his remarks, he must repeat, were irrelevant. He considered the proceeding as a judicial one, suspending Brother Andrew from his duties as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

J. T. Peck then moved the previous question; it prevailed, the roll was called and the votes given "amid the most profound silence." The vote for the resolution, declaring that "it is the sense of this conference that Bishop Andrew desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains," was one hundred and eleven, and the vote against it was sixty-nine.

All the votes from the Middle, Eastern, and Western States were cast for the resolution, except three from the Illinois Conference, five from the Baltimore, four from the Philadelphia, two from the New Jersey, and one each from the New York, Michigan, and Rock River conferences.

But one resident of the South voted for it; he was John

Clark, a delegate from the republic of Texas, who entered the New York Conference in 1820 and filled various important stations in the East and in the West. He was a delegate to the General Conference of 1840 from the Illinois Conference. On account of his vote on this and other resolutions on the subject the Texas Conference at its next session passed special censure upon him; but he had taken his family to the North and never returned to that country.<sup>1</sup> Thrall, a competent critic, who was influenced to go to Texas by Martin Ruter's letters in the "Christian Advocate," and lived there from 1837 until his death a few years ago, says that "Clark was remarkably dignified and impressive in the pulpit, and was acceptable and useful in Texas during his stay there."

Lovick Pierce informed the conference that at the earliest possible moment the Southern delegates would enter "a manly, ministerial, and proper protest against this extrajudicial act. . . . The constitutionality or otherwise of their proceeding would probably be tried before other tribunals." He believed that "when the public mind has been sounded, and the deep tones of public opinion come peeling from all quarters of the connection, there will be a verdict in favor of the South."

Slicer and Sargent, of Baltimore, proposed a resolution that "it is the sense of the General Conference that the vote in the case of Bishop Andrew be understood as advisory only, and not in the light of a judicial mandate, and that the final disposition of his case be postponed until the General Conference of 1848."

Capers proposed resolutions recommending to the Annual Conferences to suspend the constitutional restrictions, so as in effect to divide the supreme legislative body into two General Conferences: one to include the States and

<sup>1</sup> Thrall's "History of Methodism in Texas," p. 84.

Territories *south* of the line which divides those commonly designated free States from those in which slavery exists, and also the republic of Texas; the other to comprehend those *north* of the said line. Each conference should have full powers under the present limitations and restrictions to elect bishops and make rules and regulations for the church within its territorial limits. In case three quarters of the members of the Annual Conferences should approve these resolutions, the said Southern and Northern General Conferences should be deemed as having been constituted by the joint approval of the General and Annual Conferences, and should meet quadrennially, each within its own territory. The resolutions further provided that, in the event of such approval, the first Southern General Conference should convene in Nashville, Tenn., May 1, 1848, and be composed of delegates duly elected from the Annual Conferences. The business of the Book Concern should be conducted as before, the editors and agents being elected at the time of the session of the Northern General Conference, and the votes of the Southern General Conference cast by delegates of that conference attending the Northern for the purpose; also it was provided that the work of foreign missions should be maintained and conducted jointly between the two General Conferences as one church in such manner as should be agreed upon from time to time.

The resolutions of Capers were referred to a committee of nine: Paine of Tennessee, Filmore of Genesee, Akers of Illinois, N. Bangs of New York, Crowder of Virginia, Sargent of Baltimore, Winans of Mississippi, Hamline of Ohio, Porter of New England.

Before the announcement of the names of the committee McFerrin, of Tennessee, and Spicer, of Troy, offered the following resolution:

“*Resolved*, That the committee appointed to take into consideration the communication of the delegates from the Southern Conferences be instructed, provided they cannot in their judgment devise a plan for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties now existing in the church on the subject of slavery, to devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the church.”

Upon this significant motion, Crowder moved to strike out the word “constitutional.” This did not prevail, and the resolution was adopted.

Longstreet presented the following document, signed by fifty-two delegates; except one from Illinois, all were from the South.

“The delegates of the conferences in the slave-holding States take leave to *declare* to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church that the continued agitation on the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the church, the frequent action on that subject in the General Conference, and especially the extrajudicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew, which resulted on Saturday last in the virtual suspension of him from his office as superintendent, must produce a state of things in the South which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General Conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slave-holding States.”

A motion was made by C. Elliott to refer this declaration to a committee of nine.

This created some discussion and led Stephen Olin to read these resolutions:

“*Resolved*, That this conference does not consider its action in the case of Bishop Andrew as either judicial or punitive, but as a prudential regulation for the security and welfare of the church.

*Resolved*, That, having made a solemn declaration of what, in their judgment, the safety and peace of the church require, it is not necessary or proper to express any opinion as to what amount of respect may justly belong to their action in the premises."

Olin said he would not press these resolutions upon the conference, whereupon a call for the previous question was sustained, and the paper of the Southern delegates referred to the committee of nine.

Henry B. Bascom read to the conference, on Thursday, June 6th, the Protest of the Southern delegates in relation to the action in the case of Bishop Andrew. It was presented "in behalf of thirteen Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and portions of the ministry and membership of several other conferences, embracing nearly five thousand ministers, traveling and local, and a membership of nearly five hundred thousand constitutionally represented in this General Conference."

It was based upon the absence of power in the General Conference to suspend, depose, or otherwise subject a bishop to any official disability whatever without the formal presentation of a charge or charges alleging that he has been guilty of the violation of some law or disciplinary obligation of the church, and also upon conviction of such charge after due form of trial; it involved a violation of the fundamental law essentially known as the compromise law of the church on the subject of slavery; and it was a dangerous precedent, unnecessary, and inimical to the coördinancy of the episcopacy as the executive department proper of the government. These propositions were argued at length in the Protest, which maintained that, should it be made to appear that the action in Andrew's case was intended only to advise and request, it would not in any way affect

the real or relative character of the movement. It affirmed that, "upon the principle that Andrew had become unacceptable to the Northern conferences without any infringement of law, it would follow that any bishop of the church either violating or submitting to a violation of the compromise charter of union between the North and South, without proper and public remonstrance, cannot be acceptable at the South and need not appear there."

The Protest closed with the expression of the hope that, "should the exigent circumstances in which the minority find themselves placed by the facts and developments alluded to in this remonstrance render it finally necessary that the Southern conferences should have a *separate, independent* existence, the character and services of the minority, together with the numbers and claims of the ministry and membership of the portion of the church represented by them, not less than similar reasons and considerations on the part of the Northern and Middle conferences, will suggest the high moral fitness of meeting this great emergency with strong and steady purpose to do justice to all concerned. And it is believed that, approaching the subject in this way, it will be found practicable to devise and adopt such measures and arrangements, present and prospective, as will secure an amicable division of the church upon the broad principles of right and equity, and destined to result in the common good of the great body of ministers and members found on either side *the line of separation.*"

The Protest was signed by the Southern delegates, and also by Berryman and Stamper of Illinois, Schon of Ohio, and Sovereign and Neal of New Jersey.

Matthew Simpson moved that, "while they could not admit the statements put forth in the Protest, yet, as a matter of courtesy, they would allow it to be placed on



the 'Journal,' and that a committee consisting of Durbin, Olin, and Hamline be appointed to make a true statement of the case to be entered on the 'Journal.' " Hamline and Olin declined to serve, the latter on the ground of illness which compelled him to depart for his home, and George Peck and Charles Elliott were appointed.

Winans objected to the word "courtesy." The chair decided that the minority had a right to have the Protest entered on the "Journal"; in this decision two of his Episcopal colleagues concurred and from it one dissented. Simpson withdrew the first part of his resolution, and the remainder was adopted.

Bishop Soule presented this document :

*" To the General Conference.*

" REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN: As the case of Bishop Andrew unavoidably involves the future *action* of the superintendents, which, in their judgment, in the present position of the bishop, they have no discretion to decide upon, they respectfully request of the General Conference *official* instruction in answer to the following questions:

" 1. Shall Bishop Andrew's name remain as it now stands in the Minutes, Hymn-book, and Discipline, or shall it be struck off of these official records?

" 2. How shall the bishop obtain his support; as provided for in the Form of Discipline, or in some other way?

" 3. What work, if any, may the bishop perform, and how shall he be appointed to the work?

" (Signed)      JOSHUA SOULE,  
                       " ELIJAH HEDDING,  
                       " BEVERLY WAUGH,  
                       " T. A. MORRIS."

This caused an irregular debate, which was ended by the adoption of the following :

“ *Resolved*, 1. As the sense of this conference, that Bishop Andrew’s name stand in the Minutes, Hymn-book, and Discipline as formerly.

“ *Resolved*, 2. That the rule in relation to the support of a bishop and his family applies to Bishop Andrew.

“ *Resolved*, 3. That whether any and in what work Bishop Andrew be employed is to be determined by his own decision and action, in relation to the previous action of this conference in his case.”

The first resolution passed by a vote of one hundred and fifty-four against eighteen; the second by one hundred and fifty-one against fourteen; and the third by one hundred and three against sixty-seven.

By a vote of one hundred and twenty-seven to forty-eight on the roll-call, the following report of the Committee on Slavery was passed on the 7th of June :

“ *Resolved*, That the resolutions passed at the last General Conference of 1840 on the subject of the testimony of colored persons in church trials be, and the same are hereby, rescinded.”

The report of the Committee of Nine, commonly known as “ The Plan of Separation,” and sometimes as “ The Plan of Adjustment,” was elaborately discussed under a motion to adopt it, made by Elliott, of Ohio. The entire document as finally adopted, which is necessary to an understanding of subsequent events, may be found in the Appendix. It is here epitomized :

“ WHEREAS, A declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with the signatures of *fifty-one* delegates of the body, from thirteen Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the

Christian ministry and church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and

“WHEREAS, In the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration asks attention as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

“*Resolved*, By the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled,

“That, should the Annual Conferences in the slaveholding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the Northern boundary of such connection.”

It provided a method of determining the limits of the two churches; granted to ministers the privilege of choice between them; recommended the Annual Conferences to repeal the restrictive rule regulating the appropriation of the proceeds of the Book Concern; provided for the transfer to the Southern church of accounts against ministers and citizens of the South, and of real estate and other property located there belonging to the Book Concern; and for the division of the capital stock and the transfer of an equitable portion to the church South. It appointed three commissioners to act in concert with three from the Southern church to arrange these divisions and transfers; suggested a plan for joint action of the book-agents of the two churches for settling claims; proposed to free property, churches, and schools then owned by the Methodist Episcopal Church within the limits of the Southern organization from all obligations to said church; also to guarantee to both churches the use of all copyrights in the possession of the Book Concern; and provided for a similar division of the Chartered Fund.

It requested the bishops to bring before the Annual Conferences as soon as possible such part of the report as required their action, beginning with the New York.

Elliott, of Ohio, opened the debate. His remarks in part are thus represented in the official account: "All history did not furnish an example of such a large body of Christians remaining in such close and unbroken connection as the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was now found necessary to separate this large body, for it was becoming unwieldy. . . . In his own mind it had been for several years perfectly clear that to this conclusion they must eventually come. Were the question that now unhappily agitated the church dead and buried, there would be good reason for passing the resolutions contained in that report."

Griffith, of Baltimore, said that he would oppose this measure even though he stood alone; that they dared not refer the question to the Annual Conferences; that no one had a right to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church. He declared that the plan put it in the power of any set of men to make a distinct body whenever they chose.

Cartwright opposed it. The plan would create war and strife in the border conferences, would be a bad precedent, and tend to divide the church into a thousand ramifications. He would say to his Southern brethren, who were coming up to this measure in a solid phalanx, what they had said to him: "Pause; and if you will not do it for our, do it for your own, sakes." He was willing to go for only one proposition—to lay the case before the people during the next four years.

Paine, of Tennessee, favored it. He trusted that secession would not take place. The measure had been concocted in a spirit of compromise and fraternal feeling in the hope of preventing agitation and schism.

Luckey, of Genesee, favored the report, which, though settling nothing, provided in an amicable and proper way for such action as it might be necessary to take. The danger apprehended by Cartwright existed only in the fires of his imagination. Wesley had contended at one time for the unity of the Methodist body throughout the world, but subsequently saw it necessary to permit the connection in the United States to separate; and had it not been for the best?

Bangs, of New York, hoped the time would never come for a separation, but on the appearance of two evils chose the least; the choice was between the violent separation of the South and its peaceable and amicable separation. If they did separate, the laws, Discipline, government, all would be the same, and they should be as warm in their affection toward each other as they were now. Bangs hoped for a unanimous decision.

Filmore, of Genesee, said fears existed, and by debating this the church proposed that if these fears proved well grounded they would divide into two churches.

Finley, of Ohio, could see in the report no proposition to divide the church. He discerned nothing unconstitutional in it, and drew a parallel between what was now proposed and what was done for the Canada Conference. An issue was raised about that legislation, and while the journals were being searched, Hamline, by consent, explained that the only point which touched the constitution in the report related to the division of the funds of the Book Concern, and that was the only one to be sent to the Annual Conferences. He thought the report could not be objected to on the ground of unconstitutionality, and exclaimed, "I, for one, would wish to have my name recorded affirming them to be brethren if they find that they must separate. God forbid that they should

go as an arm torn out of the body, leaving the point of junction all gory and ghastly! But let them go as brethren beloved in the Lord, and let us hear their voice, responsive, claim us for brethren."

Bond, the editor of the "Christian Advocate," who, though not a member of the conference, had been invited to participate in its debates, opposed the report, predicting that it would produce warfare on the borders, and consequently the interior could not be at peace. The brethren who prepared the report had taken the worst course arbitrators could take; namely, to attempt to split the difference.

Collins thought the report contained the best proposition under the circumstances. He hoped, however, that they would not separate.

Porter, of New England, declared that the time was coming when separation must take place. The committee presented their report as the best provision for the situation. The difficulty was greater now than it was four years ago, and would increase. If there were defects in the scheme they could arrest it in the Annual Conferences.

Durbin understood that the action was to commence in the South. He thought that in the present excitement it would not be an advantage to have it begin next week in the New York Conference; he would substitute the New Jersey for the New York.

Capers appreciated Durbin's object and motives, but thought it was necessary to decide immediately. The Southern brethren stood like men "at the death." If the conference suspended action too long it would come too late. "Oh, that they could pour some oil on the troubled feelings of the South!" He knew of nothing so likely to do this as the passage of the resolution before them.

Ruter wished to substitute the Kentucky Conference

for the New Jersey ; this he understood to be the first conference in the South.

Winans recited the history of the matter as it was laid before the Committee of Nine, and said, "The only proposition was that they might have liberty if necessary to organize a separate conference ; and it is important that the South should know at an early period that they had such liberty, in order to allay the intense excitement which prevails in that portion of the work."

At this point Durbin withdrew his amendment, and after some desultory conversation the report was adopted. On the first and the test resolution there were one hundred and thirty-five votes in the affirmative and fifteen in the negative. The fifteen were Sanford and Martindale of New York, Lovejoy and Benton of Providence, Hobart and Nickerson of Maine, A. D. Peck of Black River, Snyder, Row, and Holmes of Oneida, Power and Poe of North Ohio, Cartwright of Illinois, and Griffith and Bear of Baltimore.

The second resolution was adopted by one hundred and thirty-nine to seventeen, and the third by one hundred and forty-seven to twelve ; the fourth without a roll-call ; the fifth by one hundred and fifty-three to thirteen ; the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth were adopted without a count vote, and finally the preamble was adopted.

This action was consummated on Saturday, June 8th.

On Monday afternoon, June 10th, John P. Durbin, chairman of the committee to prepare a Reply to the Protest, presented and read the report. The discussion continued until the adjournment, and was resumed on the reassembling of the conference at 8:30 in the evening.

The Reply points out that no slave-holder had been elected to the episcopacy, though several otherwise eminently fitted for the station failed of success "solely on

account of this impediment"; that of the nine bishops already elected in the history of the church only three had been Northern men, while six had been natives of the slave-holding States, but not one a slave-holder. It then recounts the circumstances of Andrew's election, gives a history of his connection with slavery, emphasizes the fact that Bishop Andrew had become the owner of slaves by bequest, by inheritance, and by marriage; and maintained that, so far as the slaves that belong to his present wife were concerned, they had become by the laws of Georgia the property of Bishop Andrew to keep or dispose of as he pleased; that he had conveyed them to a trustee for the joint use of himself and wife, of whom the survivor is to be the sole owner, and that this conveyance was made for the security of Mrs. Andrew, and with no view either to satisfy or to mislead the opinions of the Northern church; reaffirms that he could not exercise his functions without entailing disaster upon the church in the North, explains the diversity of sentiment as to the proper method of treating the case, and then the action finally adopted. It emphatically declares that that action was neither judicial nor punitive; that it did not achieve nor intend so much as a legal suspension; that Bishop Andrew "is still a bishop, and should he, against the expressed sense of the General Conference, proceed in the discharge of his functions, his official acts would be valid." The Reply examines the arguments and allegations of fact brought forth in the debate and the Protest, bearing on the constitutional aspect of the case, and adduces quotations from Asbny, Coke, Dickins, and Emory, also the undisputed expressions of Hedding.

The conclusion is important, particularly the second paragraph:

"When all the law, and the facts in the case, shall have been spread before an impartial community, the majority



have no doubt that they *will* fix 'the responsibility of division,' should such an unhappy event take place, 'where in justice *it belongs.*' They will ask, Who first introduced slavery into the episcopacy? And the answer will be, *Not the General Conference.* Who opposed the attempt to withdraw it from the episcopacy? *Not the General Conference.* Who resisted the measure of peace that was proposed—the mildest that the case allowed? *Not the majority.* Who first sounded the knell of division, and declared that it would be impossible longer to remain under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church? *Not the majority.*

“The proposition for a peaceful separation (if any must take place) with which the Protest closes, though strangely at variance with much that precedes, has already been met by the General Conference. And the readiness with which that body (by a vote which would doubtless have been unanimous but for the belief that some entertained of the unconstitutionality of the measure) granted all that the Southern brethren themselves could ask in such an event must forever stand as a practical refutation of any assertion that the minority have been subjected to the tyranny of a majority.”

Crowder declared that the passage of that report by the majority would render division inevitable. He could but regard the document as an insult to the whole South.

Early besought the brethren not to adopt it hastily. He said that some thought Crowder excited, but he himself was calm and collected. The idea set forth in the Reply, that the character of a class-leader could be examined at the Quarterly Conference, was new and contrary to the fact. He declared it unparalleled that such a Reply should be made to a Protest.

Bangs wished to know whether this debate was in order.

Bishop Waugh reminded him that the motion was to spread it on the "Journal." Longstreet said it was "the right of the minority to spread their Protest on the 'Journal,' not the right of the conference to appoint a committee to reply." He took up the original question.

Smith pointed out that in Georgia, where Andrew lived, creditors had "peculiar claims over and above children and heirs." C. Elliott claimed that the course proposed by the committee was in harmony with the rules. Collins said the report was not a protest, but a report of a committee.

Bishop Waugh thought that the conference had a right to its own judgment. They might decline to adopt, and still wish to spread it on the "Journal."

Ames defended the report. Durbin said the Protest of the minority was an elaborate argumentation of the case; that both Olin and Hamline, former members of the committee, concurred with him. He and his present colleagues, however, would consent to omit from their report the reference to class-leaders (which implied that they were amenable to the Quarterly Conference for their official conduct) and the supposititious case about Bishop Andrew's being called up at the next General Conference if he continued to exercise his functions. He had not expected the report to be adopted, but to be placed without debate by the side of the Protest.

Smith, of Virginia, charged the majority with having attempted "to deceive the public long enough," and desired them to tell the five hundred thousand Methodists South what they wanted to do.

The motion to spread the report on the "Journal" and print it was carried, and the call of the roll showed one hundred and sixteen votes in the affirmative and twenty-six in the negative. Those in the negative were all from

the South except seven; and of those in the affirmative twenty were from the South.

The conference adjourned about midnight on the 10th of June.

Before departing from the city, on the 11th, the Southern delegates met to deliberate on their future course. They issued an address to the ministers and members of their conferences, giving information of the action of the General Conference with respect to a possible separation. In this they said, "It affords us pleasure to state that there were those found among the majority who made this proposition with every manifestation of justice and liberality, and, should a similar spirit be exhibited by the Annual Conferences in the North, there will remain no legal impediment to its legal consummation." They recommended that, to prevent undue haste and forestall divided counsels, nothing be done till the conferences represented could meet in a general convention, for the time of which they suggested May 1, 1845, and for the place Louisville, Ky., and that this convention should be composed of delegates from the Southern conferences in the proportion of one delegate to eleven members.

Although great public excitement had been caused in the vicinity of New York by the debates and the action of the conference during the session, after the adjournment it extended widely.

"All possible phases of the question—slave-holding and slave traffic, antislaveryism, emancipation, abolitionism, slave-holding preachers and bishops, the constitutionality and unconstitutionality of the division, the probable results of secession, etc.—were discussed throughout the entire country."<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Andrew, in August, 1844, issued an address to

<sup>1</sup> Curtiss's "Manual of Methodist Episcopal Church History," p. 182.

the public, justifying his course and that of the Southern delegates.

The bishops prepared two plans of Episcopal distribution; in that published they gave Andrew no work. Soule protested against this. Bishop Morris, in a private letter to Bishop Andrew, explained why it was done. The published plan was upon the assumption that he would decide not to act, and the reserved plan was in anticipation of his possible decision to take work. Invited by Bishop Soule to attend his conferences, Andrew, in the fall, joined him at Frankfort, the seat of the Kentucky Conference. Having no separate duty assigned him, he assisted Soule in his district.<sup>1</sup>

The Kentucky, held September 11, 1844, was the first Southern Conference to assemble. Resolutions were passed, with but one vote in the negative, declaring that in the case of Bishop Andrew and F. A. Harding the action was not sustained by the Discipline of the church; that it was a dangerous precedent; that they regretted the prospect of division therefrom resulting; that they approved the proposed convention of delegates, and also the course of the delegates from the South in the late General Conference; that they should deem the contemplated division unavoidable unless their ministry and membership could be secured against future corrections, and reparation be made for past injury; and they invited the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to attend the contemplated convention.

Similar resolutions were passed by the other Southern conferences, some adopting stronger forms of expression. Upon the whole, the unanimity of sentiment and action was extraordinary, and the Missouri, Holston, Tennessee, Memphis, Mississippi, Arkansas, Virginia, North Carolina,

<sup>1</sup> Smith's "Life and Letters of Bishop Andrew," pp. 376-378.

South Carolina, Georgia, Texas, Alabama, and Indian Mission conferences elected delegates to the Louisville convention.

The convention met in Louisville at the time appointed, nearly one hundred delegates in attendance. Dr. Lovick Pierce was made temporary president; Thomas O. Summers was elected secretary. Bishops Soule, Andrew, and Morris were present. The convention requested them to preside in turn, but Morris declined. Soule on the second day addressed the body in a manner adapted to promote its purpose. He told them that his opinion at the close of the late General Conference, that the proceedings of that body would result in a division of the church, was not induced by the impulse of excitement, but was deduced from principles and effects after the most deliberate and mature consideration; that, believing it to be unavoidable, his effort had been not to prevent, but to see that it produced the least injury and the greatest amount of good possible. He also stated that in the Southern conferences which he had attended he did not recollect a dissenting voice with respect to the necessity of a separate organization.

After debating various phases of the subject, on the 17th of May the report of the Committee on Organization was adopted by a vote of ninety-four to three:

“Be it resolved by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slave-holding States, in general convention assembled, that it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the Annual Conferences represented in this convention into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as at present constituted; and accordingly we, the delegates of said Annual Conferences, acting under the provisional

Plan of Separation adopted by the General Conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said Annual Conferences by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church entirely dissolved; and that said Annual Conferences shall be, and they hereby are, constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection under the provisional Plan of Separation aforesaid, and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and canonical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

“*Resolved*, That, although we cannot abandon or compromise the principles of action upon which we proceed to a separate organization in the South, nevertheless, cherishing a sincere desire to maintain Christian union and fraternal intercourse with the church North, we shall always be ready to entertain and duly and carefully consider any proposition or plan having for its object the union of the two great bodies in the North and South, whether such proposed union be jurisdictional or connectional.”<sup>1</sup>

Soule and Andrew were invited to become bishops. The latter accepted; Soule responded with a written communication to the effect that he must act as bishop among the Northern conferences until he had completed the plan of visitation settled by the bishops in New York.

After this convention the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, exclusive of Soule and Andrew, resolved to withdraw from the South. A private note from Bishop Hedding to Bishop Andrew, dated July 4, 1845, explains the circumstances: “A meeting had been invited of the

<sup>1</sup> Curtiss's “Manual of Church History,” pp. 184, 185.

bishops adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishops Waugh, Morris, Janes, and myself attended. We judged that, in consideration of the *acts* of the Louisville convention, we could not be justified in presiding in the Annual Conferences represented in the said convention. Bishops Morris and Janes desired going to the conferences assigned to them in the South, but the final decision was that it would be inadvisable."

At the time of the publication of the revised plan of episcopal visitation they also passed the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That the plan reported by a select Committee of Nine at the last General Conference, and adopted by that body, in regard to a distinct ecclesiastical connection, should such a course be found necessary by the Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States, is regarded by us as of binding obligation in the premises so far as our own administration is concerned.

"(Signed) E. S. JANES, *Secretary*."

The first General Conference met in Petersburg, Va., May 1, 1846, and consisted of eighty-seven members. John Early presided on the first day until the arrival of Andrew. On the second day Soule formally announced his adherence. The closing paragraph of his statement reads as follows:

"The organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, being thus completed in the organization of the General Conference with a constitutional president, the time has arrived when it is proper for me to announce my position. Sustaining no relation to one Annual Conference which I did not sustain to every other, and considering the General Conference as the proper judicatory to

which my communication should be made, I have declined making this announcement until the present time. And now, acting with strict regard to the Plan of Separation and under a solemn conviction of duty, I formally declare my adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. And if the conference receive me in my present relation to the church I am ready to serve them according to the best of my ability. In conclusion, I indulge the joyful assurance that, although separated from our Northern brethren by a distinct conference jurisdiction, we shall never cease to treat them as 'brethren beloved,' and cultivate those principles and affections which constitute the essential unity of the church of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

The conference elected Early book-agent, and made the editors of the "Christian Advocates" at Charleston, Richmond, and Louisville assistants and subject to his direction in depository matters. A "Quarterly Review" was ordered to be started at Louisville, H. B. Bascom, editor. A constitution for the Church Missionary Society was adopted, and the bishops were authorized to appoint two missionaries to China. E. Stevenson was elected missionary secretary; T. O. Summers editor of the Sunday-school paper. Provision was made for revising the hymn-book, and commissioners were appointed to act in concert with the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church in adjusting mutual interests in the Book Concern. Also it was ordered that, should the commissioners appointed by the General Conference fail to effect a settlement as above, they were authorized to "take such measures as might best secure the just and equitable claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the property and effects aforesaid."

William Capers and Robert Paine were elected bishops,

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire's "History of Methodism," p. 643.



and ordained by Soule and Andrew, assisted by Lovick Pierce and John Early. Pierce was appointed a delegate to the ensuing General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church "to tender to that body the Christian regards and fraternal salutations of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

Capers had risen to a commanding position in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Eighteen years before he had represented that body as fraternal delegate to the British Conference; and one year later had established missions to slaves, taking the position of superintendent thereof, and had been astonishingly successful; six years before he had been elected one of the general missionary secretaries.

Paine had for sixteen years been president of La Grange College, Alabama, and in 1844 was chairman of the committee on episcopacy and of the committee which drew up the Plan of Separation.

The section and rule on slavery were left unchanged, but an explanatory statement was added that it was understood "in the sense of the declarations made by the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840."<sup>1</sup>

At that time the new organization contained 459,569 members, in which were included 1519 traveling preachers. Of these members 124,961 were colored.

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," by Gross Alexander ("American Church History," vol. ii.), p. 48.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A CALM SURVEY.

IN reviewing this controversy in the colder and clearer light of the present day, a recognition of certain facts is essential to the formation of an impartial and equitable judgment.

When Methodism arose in America slavery existed in all parts of the country, with a tendency to increase rapidly in the South. The difficulties to which it gave rise were far greater in the South than in the North. The restrictions upon freedom of speech, which are necessary to enforce subordination and preserve social order where slavery exists, embarrassed and almost prevented discussion of the merits and demerits of the institution. In the North, where the number of slaves gradually diminished until they disappeared, the only impediments to public consideration of the subject arose from commercial and social connection with the South and the intermingling of political parties.

In the South agriculture and the sale of its products offered a much larger field for slave labor than could be found in the North, where manufactures and commerce predominated; and while the warmth of the Southern climate reduced the cost of maintaining slaves, it acted as an impediment to white labor.

Little by little, the spirit of Methodism became less aggressive and more indulgent toward an institution relent-

lessly denounced by Coke and for a time by Asbury. When, after many changes, a general conviction had arisen in the South that slavery was a permanent institution, the abolition movement arose in the North and conflict was unavoidable.

An organized effort to crush abolitionism was made in the Conference of 1836 and culminated in that of 1840. Meanwhile, in New England and those parts of the West settled largely by New Englanders, abolitionism grew until it became a predominant sentiment.

The only speech delivered in the General Conference of 1844 which exhibited a full comprehension and just estimate of all sides of the subject was that of Stephen Olin, who was as familiar with the North as with the South.

He explained the rise of the abolition excitement in New England and the other Northern States, and affirmed that "the interests, the purposes, and the measures which seem at this time to unite the North in sympathy have not originated with abolitionists, usually so called"; that the New York and Troy conferences were not and never had been abolition conferences, but, together with many other Northern conferences, they had firmly opposed that movement; and that, generally speaking, Northern Methodists regarded "slavery as a great evil, though not necessarily a sin." He thus analyzed the origin of antislavery sentiment: "Brethren fall into a great error in imagining that all the abolition influence abroad in the Northern churches originated in them. On the contrary, our common newspapers, the contests and canvasses connected with our elections, our political literature, are rife with abolitionism on other and broader grounds. It is perhaps to be regretted that this embarrassing subject is so much discussed at the North, but it is certainly true that Meth-

odists here derive their sentiments chiefly from such sources as I have intimated—from their reading and from intercourse with their fellow-citizens. They are abolitionists naturally and unavoidably because they breathe the atmosphere of this country; because the sea is open to free adventure, and their freighted ships bring home periodicals and books from all the countries of Europe, tinged or, if any prefer, infected with these views. The difficulties of this question, then, do not arise chiefly from its relation to abolitionism in the church, but from the general condition of feeling among the people of the non-slaveholding States.”

Contrasting the difficulties in the South with those in the North, he said: “I know the difficulties in the South. I know the excitement that is likely to prevail among the people there. Yet, allowing our worst fears all to be realized, the South will have this advantage over us: the Southern forces are likely, in any event, to harmonize among themselves; they will form a compact body. In our Northern conferences this will be impossible in the present state of things. They cannot bring their whole people to act together on one common ground; stations and circuits will be so weakened and broken as in many instances to be unable to sustain their minister.”

This was absolutely true. When, in 1843, the secession of Orange Scott and his colleagues took place nothing was more certain than that, if Andrew as a slave-holder were allowed to exercise his episcopal functions, a general secession in New England would follow, and that agitation and contention would prevail, accompanied by withdrawals in many churches in the North and West and in some of the Middle States.

That different views of the constitution concerning the powers of the episcopacy had grown up, diverging more

and more, and that they were held by a large majority in the South and by a strong minority in the North, are facts of fundamental importance in estimating this controversy. Joshua Soule, whose hand was upon every letter and line of the constitution, threw the unequaled weight of his influence into the scale against the right of the conference to request Andrew to desist, interpreting such a resolution as equivalent to a deposition. In harmony with that view, the majority of the speakers on the Southern side opposed on two grounds the contemplated action: that, under the circumstances, Andrew had a disciplinary right to hold slaves, and that, whether he had or not, he could only be dealt with by the process of a trial; and their more powerful paragraphs were based upon the alleged denial of constitutional rights.

It is indisputable that to *depose* Andrew without a trial would have been unconstitutional. To charge him by resolution with "sin" without proceeding to put him upon trial would have been libelous; to request the bishops not to assign him work would have been nugatory, since with their views their constitutional duties would have required them to disregard the request. But to ask him to desist from the exercise of his functions, it being expressly understood that the responsibility of deciding whether to continue rested upon himself, whether expedient or inexpedient, was not a violation of the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nevertheless, in defending this view Hamline went so far that it will ever remain mysterious that such a passage as this could have been received without a universal cry of disapprobation: "Our church constitution recognizes the episcopacy as an abstraction, and leaves this body to work it in a concrete form in any hundred or more ways we may be able to invent. We may make one, five, or twenty bishops, and if we please one for each

conference. We may refuse to elect any until all die or resign, and then, to maintain the episcopacy, which we are bound to do, we must elect one at least."

Yet this passage is practically contradicted in the same speech by another utterance with respect to the powers of the General Conference over the episcopacy, namely: "It can resume, then, all the powers granted to the bishop by its own act, except such prerogatives as are essential to episcopacy and superintendency." As the other taken by itself would assume the power to render impracticable "the plan of our itinerant superintendency" which is protected by the constitution, so this passage taken by itself would protect that plan. Since "episcopacy and superintendency," that is, the itinerant general superintendency, would require a sufficient number of bishops to accomplish the work, the episcopacy is *not* an abstraction, but a concrete institution, defined and defended in the Discipline at the time the institution was adopted.

The correction made by Hamline in reply to Smith, taken in connection with this extravagant statement, is necessary to guard his meaning. So great are the force and discrimination of statement exhibited in his speech that it is clear that, in the absence of a burning issue, Hamline would have been more cautious in the use of terms. As it was, he was no further from the original principles of Methodism in the extreme statements of the powers of the General Conference than were some upon the other side, who practically denied the right of the body to protect the church against any single act or peculiarity of a bishop or series thereof in conduct or personality, developed after his election, which actions did not bring him under the jurisdiction of a special rule of Discipline.

The resolution of the Southern delegates communicated

to Andrew, whereby he was deterred from resigning, was not adapted to promote a peaceful settlement of the difficulty. It reads thus:

“WHEREAS, Bishop Andrew has signified to the delegates of the conference in the slave-holding States a purpose to yield to the present distressing urgency of the brethren from the Northern States, and resign his office of bishop; and WHEREAS, In a meeting of said delegates to consider this matter, after solemn prayer and much deliberation, it appears to us that his resignation would inflict an incurable wound on the whole South and inevitably lead to division in the church; therefore, we do unanimously concur in requesting the bishop, by all his love for the unity of the church, which his resignation will certainly jeopardize, not to allow himself for any consideration to resign.”

Nor was the speech of Andrew calculated to make peace. Although it be granted that something had to be done to preserve the Northern societies from disintegration or from wholesale-secession, and conceded that the agitation had developed a condition of affairs in the Southern churches which embarrassed them fully as much as did the opposite state their brethren at the North, nevertheless it is one of the wonders of ecclesiastical history that a plan of separation based on a conjectural hypothesis should have been deliberately adopted by a General Conference.

Stated in the simplest terms, the plan amounted to this: A majority of nearly two thirds said, “We must request Bishop J. O. Andrew to desist from the exercise of his functions so long as he remains connected with slavery.” More than one third responded, “Bishop Andrew offered to resign, but we have told him that it is necessary that he force the issue to save the Southern churches, and we also say to you that, as you have asked him to desist from

the exercise of his functions, we think it highly improbable that it will be possible for us to continue our work in connection with your body." The majority responded, "If that be so we will prepare an easy plan for you to withdraw from us, leaving the matter of your going entirely to your judgment." They were willing to do this without consulting their constituents, not one of whom ever dreamed that such a proposition could be seriously contemplated. If, however, they could proceed thus far, it was but natural for them to say, "As we have accumulated a large property in common, we will submit to our constituents a recommendation so to change the restrictive rules that that property may be amicably divided and the mutual rights of the sundered parties satisfactorily adjusted."

It is true that the Southern delegates voted in favor of the plan, but as they alone could not have enacted it, those responsible for it included nearly all who had requested Andrew to desist. Doubtless some voted for it in the hope that so amicable a measure would prevent separation. That any could entertain such an expectation is inexplicable, except upon the assumption that fifty-two years ago the methods of ascertaining public sentiment in different sections of the country were much circumscribed and that a large part of the Northern delegates knew little or nothing of the South.

The Reply to the Protest declares that "the vote would doubtless have been unanimous but for the belief that some entertained of the unconstitutionality of the measure." The fact that there was not a majority who entertained such a doubt is the inscrutable problem of the unparalleled controversy.

It must strike the calm observer as a serious impropriety, if not a usurpation, for the General Conference, with-



out submitting each and every part of it to all the conferences, to enact legislation based on the possibility of a separation contingent upon the judgment of the departing members and ministers. A representative body making final provision for a possible separation is an anomaly. The case of Canada was, when adjusted, relatively to the whole, in numbers and property a small question and dealt with a population which was under another civil government. This situation contemplated a division of magnitude within the same country and almost wholly on geographical lines.

Had Andrew taken all the steps legally within his reach to disconnect himself from slavery before the General Conference of 1844 met, he might have delayed the inevitable crisis. In view of the widespread excitement on the slavery question in the church, that he should have allowed himself to be the spark that precipitated the explosion is surprising.

Smith, the biographer of Andrew, affirms that he had no reason to suppose that by marrying a woman who owned slaves he would cause strife, and that "if he had reason to suppose that the results which did follow would have followed, the marriage should have been preceded by resignation." Dr. Gross Alexander, commenting upon this passage in his "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,"<sup>1</sup> says, "If Bishop Andrew did not know the history of the slavery agitation in the church and country and the attitude of the two sections well enough to have reason for fearing that his marrying a slave-owner would occasion serious trouble, then, for a man in his position, his ignorance was inexcusable. If he did know these things and was indifferent to them, his indifference

<sup>1</sup> "American Church History," vol. xi., p. 20.

was more inexcusable. In any case, his position in 1844 is not one to be envied."

As there were comparatively few newspapers in those days, and, with the exception of "Zion's Herald," the papers of the church had little to say upon the subject of abolitionism, except in condemnation, and as Andrew had not traveled in New England, but had spent the principal part of his life in the West and South, holding but few conferences even in the Middle States, it is possible that he did not have reason to anticipate the excitement. He was surrounded by ministerial slave-holders. Olin when in the South had been such, and on removing to the North sold his slaves, retaining the proceeds. Capers, on whom the General Conference had conferred positions of great importance, was a slave-holder, and Andrew himself had been a slave-holder for some years before this marriage. His biographer asserts that until he reached Baltimore in April, on his way to the General Conference in New York, he was not aware that any attention had been called to it.

In a letter to his daughter, written in the midst of the discussion, Andrew said, "I would most joyfully resign if I did not dread the influence on the Southern church." Referring to the protest of the slave-holding States against his resignation under any circumstances as ruinous to the whole Southern portion of the church, he says, "I believe, in fact, they are solemnly pledged if I resign that they will to a man secede from the conference."

Nevertheless we can but wonder what the effect would have been if he had said to his brethren of the South, "I cannot be the occasion of a division of the church. I must resign. I will sacrifice my pride on the altar of unity. If, then, the abolitionists will proceed to the extreme of taking away our disciplinary rights, we can establish a new branch of Methodism on a broader foundation than unkind treat-

ment of a single official." Perhaps he might have persuaded a majority to allow him to resign; or, failing in that, had he resigned the reaction might have given the church peace for several years.

Such suppositions, however, are checked by the fact that the present generation possesses only the words that were spoken, and not all of those. The tones, the gestures, the subtle, unreportable spirit of that historic debate are beyond the possibility of scrutiny.

That every resolution was presented which could possibly offer a hope of peace indicates an intense desire on the part of a large majority of both parties to avoid the necessity of separation. Besides those formally offered, Durbin, at the close of a speech of marvelous lucidity and pathos, read a resolution which he said he would willingly offer if he had the least intimation that the brethren of the South would meet those of the North upon it:

*Resolved*, That the case of Bishop Andrew be referred to the church, and that the judgment of the next General Conference be deemed and taken to be the voice of the church whether Bishop Andrew shall continue to exercise his functions as a general superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church while he sustains the relation to slavery as stated in his communication to the conference, as reported to the conference by the committee on the episcopacy."

This was without authority or precedent, and, if adopted, would doubtless have accentuated the sectional issue, besides lighting a torch of controversy in every Methodist church in the land.

Protracted and intense agitation had led extreme abolitionists to the conclusion that slave-holding under any circumstances is a sin, while slave-holders had drifted so far in the other direction as to believe it a providential insti-

tution, and many denied that it could properly be regarded as a moral evil. It may be that the burden upon human nature was too great for any other outcome; that the collision was predestinated and preliminary to even greater things than these. Porter, of New England, an uncompromising abolitionist, who led the party that induced Hedding to withdraw his name from the letter of the bishops, and who was a member of the Committee of Nine and published a "Comprehensive History of Methodism" in 1875, is disposed to take a charitable view of the struggle: "In looking at this long-continued controversy, we find it everywhere marked by human infirmity, to say the least of it. We are not much disposed to sit in judgment on the parties involved. None of them can take great merit to themselves. If abolitionists had been brought up in the South they would probably have acted much as Southerners did, and *vice versa*."

He takes refuge in the comforting thought that Providence overruled the conduct of church and state so as to promote emancipation, a method often resorted to after great crises, but which, according to the theology of universal Methodism, does not relieve the actors of responsibility for their spirit, methods, words, and deeds.

At that very time there were those who foresaw the baleful influence which this controversy, the principles, prejudices, arguments, and facts underlying it, and the spirit which it engendered, would exert upon the relations of the States of the South to those of the North. Henry Clay's prescience and patriotism led him to write the following letter:

"ASHLAND, April 7, 1845.

"DEAR SIR: Our mutual friend, Mr. Mitchell, of Frankfort, delivered to me the day before yesterday your letter, with several publications under your name in regard to

the unfortunate controversy which has arisen in the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, all of which I have attentively perused. You desire an expression of my opinion on certain inquiries communicated in your letter.

“ I have long entertained for that church sentiments of profound esteem and regard, and I have the happiness of numbering among its members some of the best friends I have in the world. I will add with great truth that I have witnessed with much satisfaction the flourishing condition of the church and the good sense and wisdom which have generally characterized the administration of its affairs, as far as I have observed it.

“ It was, therefore, with the deepest regret that I heard in the course of the past year of the danger of a division of the church in consequence of a difference of opinion existing on the delicate and unhappy subject of slavery. A division for such a cause would be an event greatly to be deplored, both on account of the church itself and its political tendency. Indeed, scarcely any public occurrence has happened for a long time that gave me so much real concern and pain as the menaced separation of the church by a line throwing all the free States on one side and all the slave States on the other.

“ I will not say that such a separation would necessarily produce a dissolution of the political union of these States; but the example would be fraught with imminent danger, and, in coöperation with other causes unfortunately existing, its tendency on the stability of the confederacy would be perilous and alarming.

“ Entertaining these views, it would afford me the highest satisfaction to hear of an adjustment of the controversy, a reconciliation between the opposing parties in the church, and the preservation of its unity.

“ I limit myself to the political aspect of the subject, without expressing any opinion on either of the plans of compromise and settlement which have been published, which I could not do without exposing myself to improper imputations.

“ With fervent hopes and wishes that some arrangement of the difficulty may be devised and agreed upon which shall preserve the church in union and harmony,

“ I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

“ H. CLAY.

“ Dr. W. A. BOOTH.”

There is reason to suppose that certain statesmen who were themselves willing to resume the sovereignty of the State preparatory to the formation of a new confederation—a Union in which slavery should be recognized without restriction—regarded the event as a step in the right direction. Be that as it may, no evidence exists that those possibilities warped the judgment or influenced the action of any of the participants in the discussion and legislation of the General Conference of 1844, which led to the addition of another to the long list of Protestant denominations.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### FROM THE ECCLESIASTICAL TO THE NATIONAL CRISIS.

A PECULIAR interest inheres in all the transactions of the General Conference of 1844, since that was the last held by undivided Episcopal Methodism. Early in the session the Rev. Edmund S. Janes, financial secretary of the American Bible Society, was invited to take a seat within the bar of the house, and to speak on subjects connected with the Bible cause. William Nast was by resolution permitted to visit Germany with a view to more extended usefulness among his brethren of that nation.

The committee on episcopacy reported, on the 7th of June, that, owing to the want of time and opportunity, it had not arrived at any conclusion regarding the number of bishops necessary to be elected, and asked to be relieved from further action on the subject. The conference decided on the afternoon of that day to elect two bishops. On the first ballot no one was elected, and after the second ballot, which was declared irregular, Capers moved that the conference by a rising vote sustain the election of E. S. Janes. On this the previous question was moved, but not sustained. Preliminary to the third ballot the secretaries were ordered to call the roll, and each delegate went to the secretaries' desk and deposited his vote. Leonidas S. Hamline received one hundred and two, Edmund S. Janes ninety-nine, and both were elected. Hamline was presented for ordination by Pickering and

Fillmore, of the North, and Janes by L. Pierce and Capers, of the South. The imposition of hands was by Bishops Soule, Hedding, Waugh, and Morris.

Janes, who had neither been connected with any General Conference nor taken part in the controversies upon slavery, had traveled extensively in the South and was preëminently the choice of that part of the connection. McTyeire says: "Two bishops were to be elected, and the last service of the conservative South to the yet undivided church was rendered here. The elements that united in the choice of Hamline will readily occur to the reader, but the Southern delegates brought forward and concentrated on Edmund S. Janes. As one of the secretaries of the American Bible Society he had become known to them, and none could know him without perceiving his great worth and abilities."<sup>1</sup>

Janes, twin brother of Edwin L., also a minister, was a native of Sheffield, Mass., the son of a carpenter, and in the summer worked on a farm, attending school in the winter until seventeen. He became a Christian at the age of thirteen, and in his twentieth year began the study of law, being in due time admitted to the bar. The sudden death of his prospective partner led to serious reflection, and he turned to the ministry, entering the Philadelphia Conference in 1830, and, owing to his clearness of statement, which made financial questions intelligible and interesting to the ordinary mind, in two years was appointed financial agent for Dickinson College. He was pastor in Philadelphia from 1836 to 1838, was then transferred to Mulberry Street Church in New York, and at the end of his term was elected secretary of the Bible Society. He was a man of inflexible uprightness, indomitable will, and unusual spirituality. While in Philadelphia

<sup>1</sup> "History of Methodism," p. 639.



he pursued the study of medicine, not designing to practice, but from a love of knowledge and a desire to qualify himself further for the prosecution of his ministerial work. He was always self-possessed, and united the two principal elements of a perfect style—simplicity and purity of language. He passed his thirty-seventh birthday on the 27th of the April preceding his election.

Hamline's votes came exclusively from the delegations that had carried the measures opposed by the South; Janes received fifty-one Southern votes and forty-eight from the rest of the connection. He was highly esteemed in the North and probably had not an enemy in the world; but it is probable that the motion of Capers to elect him by a rising vote diminished his natural Northern vote.

Hamline was a native of Connecticut; he had been somewhat wild in youth, and skeptical; partly educated for the ministry, he turned to the law and was already practicing when, at the age of twenty-one, he was converted, and immediately began preaching, entering the Ohio Conference; where, being assigned to circuit work in a rough country, he showed himself so great a master of religious assemblies as to be at once demanded by the first churches in the cities of Ohio. He filled editorial positions from 1836 until his election as bishop, the first four years as assistant to Elliot, of the "Western Christian Advocate," and the last four as editor of the "Ladies' Repository." His appearance was commanding; his features were dark and expressive of thought and feeling under perfect control. Thomas M. Eddy says that his voice was musical and deep-toned, and that his eye had a power which he himself felt at the time of writing, though years had passed since he came under its influence. As a preacher he combined, in an extraordinary degree, culture, oratory, and emotion.

George Peck was elected editor of the "Quarterly Review," T. E. Bond of the "Christian Advocate and Journal," Edward Thomson of the "Ladies' Repository," Charles Elliot of the "Western Christian Advocate," Leroy M. Lee of the Richmond, William M. Wightman of the Southern, J. B. McFerrin of the Southwestern, William M. Hunter of the Pittsburg, and Nelson Rounds of the Northern, Daniel P. Kidder of the "Sunday-school Advocate" and also of Sabbath-school books, William Nast of the "Apologete." Charles Pitman was chosen corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society. George Lane was elected principal book-agent at New York, Charles B. Tippet assistant; Leroy Swarmstedt principal, and John T. Mitchell assistant book-agent at Cincinnati.

The constitution of the Missionary Society was revised, and that of the Sunday-school Union amended.

The proposed change in the Sixth Restrictive Rule concerning the division of the Book Concern was duly submitted to the Annual Conferences. The New York gave its approval at once. The "Western Christian Advocate," however, attacked the action of the General Conference and took strong ground against the alteration of the rule. The vote of the Ohio Conference was one hundred and thirty-two to one. Though all the Southern conferences voted in favor of it, the affirmative lacked two hundred and sixty-nine of the requisite three quarters, the negative vote being ten hundred and seventy.

The Methodist General Biblical Institute was opened at Concord, N. H., in 1847, and was the first distinctively theological institution established by American Methodism. It was opposed by many eminent ministers, who believed that it would impede the progress and probably change the character of Methodism; that such insti-

tutions might become breeding-places for heresy, and the means of substituting education for the call of God and intellectual qualifications for a living experience. Connected with the early history of this institution were Stephen M. Vail, Osmon C. Baker, and John Dempster.

The Baltimore, Pittsburg, Philadelphia, and Ohio conferences bordered upon the territory of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and as they included the States of Maryland, Delaware, and a part of the State of Virginia, they became a battle-ground. At first both parties seemed to be disposed to keep peace along the border. The South made no change in the rule regarding slavery, in part for the sake of peace and to avoid the charge of being a pro-slavery church, and doubtless in part to be acceptable to such border churches and ministers as, because of contiguity or social considerations, might naturally wish to affiliate with them. Many conferences in the North, as well as the editors of the "Christian Advocate" and "Zion's Herald," took the ground that concerning slavery no change in the Discipline was required; but the abolitionists of New England, led by James Porter, printed a communication in "Zion's Herald," entitled "Things as They Are," taking issue with these papers and "giving all parties to understand that abolitionism was in full force."<sup>1</sup> This rekindled the fire, and through the South and along the border ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church were stigmatized as abolitionists and incendiaries, while the charge was hurled against the church South that it was a pro-slavery church. In the more uncivilized sections mobs arose, and Northern and Southern secular and religious newspapers fed the flame. Such contentions were to be expected, and were the more bitter because in many instances members of the same families

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph."

took opposite sides and acted in harmony with their positions.

As the General Conference approached, opposition to the action of the preceding conference increased. When the General Conference convened in Pittsburg it represented 780 traveling preachers and 532,290 members less than the Methodist Episcopal Church numbered four years before. There was but one memorial on slavery.

A communication was received from Lovick Pierce, delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and referred to the committee on the state of the church:

*“To the Bishops and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General Conference assembled.*

“REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN: The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, appointed me as their delegate to bear to you the Christian salutations of the church South, and to assure you that they sincerely desire that the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists, North and South, should maintain at all times a warm, confiding, and fraternal relation to each other; and through me they make this offer, and very ardently desire that you, on your part, will accept it in the same spirit of brotherly love and kindness.

“The acceptance or rejection of this proposition made by your Southern brethren is entirely at your disposal, and, as my situation is one of painful solicitude until this question is decided, you will allow me to beg your earliest attention to it.

“And I would further say that your reply to this communication will most gratify me if it is made officially, in the form of resolutions.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully yours, in the unity of Wesleyan Methodism,

“L. PIERCE.”

That committee reported that:

“WHEREAS, A letter from Rev. L. Pierce, D.D., delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, proposing fraternal relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has been presented to this conference; and WHEREAS, There are serious questions and difficulties existing between the two bodies; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That, while we tender to the Rev. Dr. Pierce all personal courtesies, and invite him to attend our sessions, this General Conference does not consider it proper at present to enter into fraternal relations with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

“GEORGE PECK, *Chairman.*”

This report was adopted after being amended by the following words: “*Provided*, however, that nothing in this resolution shall be so construed as to operate as a bar to any propositions from Dr. Pierce, or any other representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, toward the settlement of existing difficulties between that body and this.”

Pierce declined the courtesy of a seat within the bar, saying, “I can only be known in my official character. You will therefore regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time either now or hereafter by the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if ever made on the basis of the Plan of Separation, as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the church South will cordially entertain the proposition.”

The bishops were instructed to prepare a statement of the instances in which they considered that the plan had been violated by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in sending ministers and organizing societies within the bounds of the territory of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is printed in the appendix to the "Journal."

The conference adopted a plan for the revision of the standard hymn-book.

Soule addressed a letter to the conference, giving an account of the action of the Southern conferences in establishing the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, testifying that their deliberations and decisions had been conducted with the strictest regard to the provisions of that plan, and in a spirit of peace, brotherly kindness, and charity. He declared that, though he had adhered to the church South, he held himself amenable to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for his acts until May 1, 1846. He alleged that Elliot, of the "Western Christian Advocate," had made statements which he regarded as injurious to himself, affirming that he had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church under grave charges, or liable to them, and announced that he was present to ascertain if any such were made against him. He expressed regret that they had declined to recognize a fraternal relation to the church South.

The conference resolved that "it is the sense of this General Conference that they have no jurisdiction over the Rev. Bishop Soule, and can exercise no ecclesiastical authority over him."

From the board of commissioners appointed by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to adjust the property question a communication was received, stating that they had informed the commissioners appointed by the Methodist Episcopal Church of their readiness to proceed,

and had been by them referred to that General Conference, and that they were then present in Pittsburg ready to negotiate.

The final action on questions relating to the disruption of the church was embodied in the report on the state of the church as amended on motion of Matthew Simpson and Daniel Curry. The statement consisted of eight items, adopted seriatim under a call of the roll:

“ 1. The report of the select Committee of Nine, on the declaration of the delegates in the slave-holding States, adopted by the General Conference of 1844, of which the memorialists complain, and the operation of which deprived them of their privileges as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was intended to meet a necessity which it was alleged might arise, and was given as a peace-offering to secure harmony on our Southern border.

“ 2. It was further made dependent, first, upon the concurrence of three fourths of the members of the several Annual Conferences, in reference to a part of its regulations.

“ 3. And, secondly, upon the observance of certain provisions respecting a boundary by the distinct ecclesiastical connection separating from us, should such connection be formed.

“ 4. Without waiting, as this conference believes, for the occurrence of the anticipated necessity for which the plan was framed, action was taken in the premises by the Southern delegates.

“ 5. The Annual Conferences, by their votes officially received, have refused to concur with that part of the plan which was submitted to them.

“ 6. And the provisions respecting a boundary have been violated by the highest authorities of said connection which separated from us, and thereby the peace and

harmony of many of the societies in our Southern border have been destroyed.

“ 7. Therefore, in view of these facts, as well as for the principles contained in the preceding declarations, there exists no obligation on the part of this conference to observe the provisions of said plan.

“ 8. And it is hereby declared *null and void*.”

It was resolved to submit the disputed property claims to the decision of disinterested arbiters, unless the book-agents, on the advice of eminent legal counsel, should be satisfied that, when clothed with all the authority which the General Conference could confer, their corporate powers would not warrant them to submit said claims to arbitration, then this resolution should not be binding upon them. Also that if they had not the power to submit the case to *voluntary* arbitration, and the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, should begin a lawsuit, they were authorized to tender an adjustment of their preferred claims by *legal* arbitration; and should they find themselves not authorized to do this, and no suit should be commenced by the commissioners from the South, then the General Conference, being exceedingly desirous of effecting an amicable settlement of said claim, recommended to the Annual Conferences to suspend the Sixth Restrictive Rule so far as to authorize the book-agents to submit said claim to arbitration; and finally, that if the above-specified contingency should take place the bishops were requested to lay the resolution before the several Annual Conferences.

Although these resolutions were adopted, there was in each instance a heavy vote against them.

Abel Stevens was elected editor of the “Christian Advocate” instead of Bond. None among the younger ministers of Methodism had attained so high a reputation



for versatility, and Bond at that time is said not to have desired reëlection, but Stevens declined the office, and George Peck was elected. John McClintock was chosen editor of the "Quarterly Review," Matthew Simpson of the Western, William Hosmer of the "Northern Christian Advocate," B. F. Tefft of the "Ladies' Repository." Levi Scott took the place of Tippet as assistant book-agent in New York, and John H. Power that of Mitchell in Cincinnati. Charles Elliot was appointed to write a history of the preceding quadrennium, and produced a huge volume entitled "The Great Secession." Porter's description of it<sup>1</sup> is quaint and true: "A valuable book abounding in documents relative to slavery and abolition and their concomitants, and, singular as it may seem, in unutterable hatred to both."

Soon after the adjournment the bishops organized the ministers and churches on the Pacific coast into the Oregon and California Mission Conference. Isaac Owen, of Indiana, was sent out in the spring of 1849 as the first regularly appointed missionary. William Taylor, of the Baltimore Conference, soon followed. Owen crossed the plains with farm wagons drawn by oxen. Taylor bought a church and, by way of Cape Horn, shipped it to San Francisco.

Prosperity attended the work, and able ministers of various important conferences were sent there. A school was opened at San José; the "California Christian Advocate" was established, and its first number, edited by M. C. Briggs and S. D. Simonds, appeared October 10, 1851.

Even the Indians became involved in controversies concerning the division of the church, especially the Wyandottes, who had been removed from Ohio to Indian Territory in 1843.

<sup>1</sup> "History of Methodism," p. 268

The commissioners of the church South gave notice on August 20, 1849, that they had entered, in the United States Circuit Court for New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, suit for the division of the property of the Book Concern. The suit in Ohio had been filed on the 12th of the preceding month, but it was not argued until June 4, 1852. The decision of Judge Leavitt was adverse to the church South, and was founded upon these propositions: that the General Conference is a delegated body with limited powers, and has no authority, directly or indirectly, to divide the church; that in the Plan of Separation there is no claim to the exercise of such power; that the conference is prohibited from using the produce of the Book Concern, except for a particular purpose and in a particular way, and the Annual Conferences had refused to remove the prohibition; that it is a charity to be used only for the benefit of those who remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church; that any of its members may withdraw, but in so doing take with them no rights of property; that the withdrawal of the Southern conferences was voluntary and not induced by positive necessity; that the defendants are required by law to comply with the rules and regulations of the General Conference, and therefore had been guilty of no breach of trust; and that this is not a case for a court of equity to construct a new scheme.

Another suit had been brought in New York by H. B. Bascom and others. This was tried, in May, 1851, in the United States Circuit Court for the southern district of New York. The counsel for the church South were Daniel Lord, Reverdy Johnson, and Reverdy Johnson, Jr.; Rufus Choate, George Wood, and E. L. Fancher were counsel for the book-agents, who were defendants. Judge Nelson decided against the Methodist Episcopal Church, declaring that the General Conference of 1844

proceeded upon the assumption of unquestioned power to erect the church into two separate ecclesiastical establishments, from which he deduced the conclusion that, as the separation had taken place by the action of the founders of the fund, it could not be maintained that the conferences which fell into the new organization had forfeited the character which entitled them to its enjoyment.

The suit in Ohio having been decided against the church South, it appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States. The case was heard in Washington in April, 1854, and Judge Nelson was chosen to write the decision, which was in substance the same as that which he delivered in the New York case. This decision ordered a *pro rata* division. In accordance with this decree the agents at New York and Cincinnati paid the representatives of the church South two hundred and seventy thousand dollars in cash, and transferred the presses and papers belonging to the church in the South, and all debts due within the bounds of the Southern conferences. The lawyers on both sides were prompted by distinguished Methodists—Smith of Virginia and Green of Tennessee on the Southern side, and N. Bangs and George Peck on the Northern. Judge McLean, the only Methodist member of the Supreme Court, took no part in the decision.

Willamette University was founded at Salem, Ore., 1844; Baldwin University at Berea, O., 1846; and Mount Union College, Mount Union, O., in the same year. The New Hampshire Conference Seminary and the Williamsport Dickinson Seminary were established respectively in 1845 and 1848. The Mount Pleasant College was chartered by the territorial legislature of Iowa in 1849; its charter was changed in 1854, and its name altered to that of the Iowa Wesleyan University. The University of the Pacific, located midway between Santa Clara and San

José, Cal., was chartered in 1851 as the California Wesleyan College.

At a "meeting of persons favorable to the establishment of a university in Chicago under the patronage and government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Chicago, May 31, 1850," the Northwestern University was projected, and the charter was approved by the governor of Illinois January 28, 1851.

Stephen Olin, president of Wesleyan University, died on the 15th of August, 1851. To no minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church can the term "great" be applied with more unquestionable propriety than to him, and it was equally suitable whether applied physically, intellectually, or morally. McClintock, the scholar and critic, compares him with Demosthenes in the union "of force and reasoning, fire of imagination and heat of declaration."

Bishop Hedding died at his residence in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., April 9, 1852. He was the senior bishop from 1844 until his death, and closed a laborious and useful career in the enjoyment of universal respect.

With a very hopeful spirit the General Conference of 1852 assembled in the city of Boston. There were now 728,700 members and 4513 traveling preachers. The preceding quadrennium had been an era of church-building and of general prosperity. One hundred and eighty-eight delegates appeared, over whom Waugh, Morris, and Janes presided. Hamline was unable to be present on account of illness, and addressed a letter to the conference concerning the condition of his health when elected, its subsequent improvement, his increasing weakness in 1850, and reporting the judgment of physicians that his heart was so diseased as to forbid future labor, concluding: "Eight years ago I felt that divine Providence had strangely called me to the office; I now feel that the same Providence permits

me to retire. I therefore tender my resignation and a request to be released from my official responsibilities as soon as the way shall be prepared by the action of the episcopal committee." He placed his ordination papers in the hands of the bishops.

The committee reported three resolutions: one of sympathy, another approving his administration and character, and the third accepting his resignation. The first and second were unanimously adopted; but on the third Collins offered a resolution requesting the bishops to return to Hamline his parchments and inform him that the General Conference declined to accept his resignation, but granted him unrestricted permission, and advised him to adopt and pursue such a course as the restoration of his health might dictate.

It was laid on the table by a vote of one hundred and sixty-one to ten. The discussion upon the subject was peculiarly frank, and did much to establish the true doctrine concerning the office of bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, as distinguished from the claim, made by prelatical churches, that it is a third order.

The conference approved a proposition to remove the remains of Asbury and Emory from the vault beneath the pulpit of the Eutaw Street Church to the new cemetery at Mount Olivet.

Leroy M. Lee, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, appeared and asked permission to copy for the use of his church the records of the General Conference from the beginning down to the session of 1844. The final action directed the book-agents at New York "to publish the journals of the General Conference from 1800 to 1836 inclusive."

Numerous petitions and memorials asked for the introduction of lay representation.

The North Ohio Conference in 1845 had advised its members not to become connected with secret societies. A number disregarded this advice, and for so doing, in 1848, were put upon trial and found guilty of imprudence. They appealed. The conference adopted this resolution: "That the action of the North Ohio Conference in 1848, in finding guilty of imprudence several of its members, was unauthorized by the Discipline."

The "California Christian Advocate," started as a private enterprise, was adopted by the church, and another established at Chicago to be known as the Northwestern. A curious motion, which did not prevail, was made to substitute "Prairie" for "Northwestern."

The committee on lay delegation, after reciting facts concerning petitions, memorials, and oral addresses which had been presented to it, reported that "it is inexpedient so to alter the economy of the church as to introduce lay delegation into the General and Annual Conferences." This was adopted by a vote of one hundred and seventy-one to three.

The conference decided to elect four bishops, who were chosen on the first ballot: Levi Scott, Matthew Simpson, Osman C. Baker, and Edward R. Ames; Scott having one hundred and thirteen, Simpson one hundred and ten, Baker ninety, and Ames eighty-nine votes.

Scott was a native of Delaware, and was fifty years of age when elected; he entered the Philadelphia Conference in 1826, and occupied important positions in Delaware, Philadelphia, and New Jersey. He was well educated, energetic, sagacious, and full of unction as a preacher, and for the preceding four years had been assistant book-agent in New York.

Simpson was born in Cadiz, O., was educated at Allegheny College, and after the usual stages was ordained

elder by Bishop Roberts at Steubenville, O., and served in the pastorate from 1833 to 1837. From the latter year to 1839 he was vice-president and professor of natural science in Allegheny College; and from 1839 to 1848 president of Indiana Asbury University. During the preceding four years he had been editor of the "Western Christian Advocate" and was a member of the Indiana Conference. He was forty-one years of age when elected.

The birthplace of Baker was in New Hampshire, and when elected he was forty years old; he studied under Fisk at Wilbraham, where he was converted in 1828; entered Wesleyan University, which he left on account of illness just before the course was finished, but completed it later, taking the second degree with his class. For ten years he taught in Newbury Seminary, the last five as principal. He was pastor and presiding elder from 1844; later became a professor in the Biblical Institute at Concord, N. H., and was a member of the New Hampshire Conference.

Ames, descended from the best New England stock, was born in Ohio in 1806, in a town that bears his family name; he was a student at the State College of Ohio, and purposed to be a lawyer, but entered the ministry and was sent by Bishop Roberts into Illinois. After preaching in Indiana and Illinois he was sent beyond the Mississippi as a missionary to the Indians. At the General Conference of 1840 he was appointed missionary secretary for the frontier, and when elected to the episcopacy was a presiding elder and a member of the Indiana Conference.

The veteran, Bond, was again elected editor of the "Christian Advocate." During the quadrennium Pitman, missionary secretary, failed in health and resigned his position, and John P. Durbin was selected to take his place, and was now made corresponding secretary. Thomas

Carlton superseded Lane in the Book Concern at New York, and Zebulon Phillips, Scott; Adam Poe succeeded Power in the Book Concern at Cincinnati; H. J. Clarke became editor of the Pittsburg "Christian Advocate," J. V. Watson of the Northwestern, S. D. Simonds of the California; Charles Elliot succeeded Simpson in the Western; and William C. Larrabee, Tefft in the "Ladies' Repository." The conference established a monthly magazine of current and religious literature and appointed Abel Stevens to edit it under the name of the "National Magazine."

An interesting episode was the receipt of an invitation to listen to Daniel Webster in Faneuil Hall, Boston, the address having been arranged for with that view. The journal shows that it was accepted. The health of the statesman was rapidly failing, but his ambition for the Presidency was not extinct, and his apprehension of the danger to the Union, unless the compromise measures which he had espoused should prevail, rendered him willing to appeal to a conference representing so numerous a constituency.

Among the men who curiously studied that body was Theodore Parker, whose extreme notions of independence made it impossible for him to see anything in the government of Methodism but a stupendous machine to destroy individuality, in its creed anything but superstition, or in its services anything but rampant fanaticism.

An extensive discussion took place after the adjournment of the General Conference as to the character of slavery and the moral standing of slave-holders. Bond, Elliot, and Clarke in their respective papers maintained the right of slave-holders to a place in the church; but "Zion's Herald," Daniel Wise, editor, the Northern, Hosmer, editor, and the Northwestern, Watson, editor, condemned all slave-holding. To those who favored the exclusion of slave-holders from the church the "Christian Advocate" applied the name of Hosmerites. Wise was



classed with Hosmer. Elliot in substance agreed with Bond. Professor William L. Harris replied to Elliot. Durbin entered the controversy, and perhaps at no time in the discussion of slavery were greater zeal and force displayed than now.

Garrett Biblical Institute was incorporated by the legislature of Illinois in 1855. It was founded by Mrs. Eliza Garrett, widow of Augustus Garrett, who was formerly mayor of Chicago. It is supposed that the first suggestion of such an institution was made to Mrs. Garrett by P. M. Borein, under whose ministry she was converted. In September, 1853, she consulted Judge Grant Goodrich, who approved. She wished, however, the judgment of others, "especially of her pastor, the Rev. John Clark." He concurred; the institution was established, her gifts and bequests to it amounting to more than \$300,000.

The twelfth delegated General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church assembled in Indianapolis in 1856. The number of members and probationers in the church was 799,431, an increase of but 16,073, and the number of traveling preachers was 6610.

The constitution was altered so as to grant to the Liberia Conference the privilege of electing to the office of missionary bishop, "an elder in good standing," his jurisdiction to be limited to Africa. Provision was made for the organization of the missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Germany into a mission conference. The settlement between the Western Book Concern and the commissioners of the church South was legally consummated. The conference adopted the "Pacific Christian Advocate" at Portland, Ore., and the Central at St. Louis, which, like the "Northwestern Christian Advocate," had been started as private enterprises. The number of conferences was increased to forty-seven. James Porter

<sup>1</sup> "History of Methodism in Texas," p. 80.

was elected assistant book-agent at New York. Bond, editor of the "Christian Advocate," had died in the preceding March, leaving a reputation for ability as an editor unequaled before and unsurpassed since in Methodist journalism. Abel Stevens was elected his successor. D. D. Whedon became editor of the "Quarterly Review," Daniel Wise of the "Sunday-school Advocate," James Floy of the "National Magazine," D. W. Clark of the "Ladies' Repository," Calvin Kingsley of the Western, F. G. Hibbard of the Northern, I. N. Baird of the Pittsburg, Thomas H. Pearne of the Pacific, Eleazar Thomas of the California, and Joseph Brooks of the "Central Christian Advocate."

This conference changed the provision for calling an extra session of the General Conference so as to make the consent of two thirds of the Annual Conferences sufficient to authorize the bishops to call an extra session. Before this the concurrent advice of all was necessary for such authorization. "This appears to have been done solely by the General Conference, and if so was unconstitutional."<sup>1</sup>

It recommended to the several Annual Conferences to alter the Discipline by adding, "and may appoint a missionary bishop or superintendent for any of our foreign missions, limiting his episcopal jurisdiction to the same respectively."

Watson, editor of the "Northwestern Christian Advocate," died a few months after the adjournment of this conference, and Dr. Thomas M. Eddy was selected to fill the vacancy.

The Liberia Conference, pursuant to the authority given to it by the change in the constitution recommended by the General Conference of 1856, which was completed by the approval of the constitutional number of members

<sup>1</sup> Neely's "Governing Conference in Methodism," p. 416.

of the Annual Conferences, selected in January, 1858, Francis Burns, a native of Albany, N. Y., and commended him for missionary bishop. His ordination took place at the session of the Genesee Conference of that year. Burns was self-educated, with more or less aid from religious friends, and particularly benefited by the counsels of the Rev. David Terry, who advised him to devote himself to ministerial work among his own people and presented him with a copy of Clarke's Commentary. With the Rev. John Seys, in 1834 he sailed to Liberia, where he became a teacher in Monrovia Seminary. After pursuing that work and preaching for ten years he returned to this country and was by Bishop Janes ordained deacon and elder. At the time of his selection for the episcopacy he was principal of Monrovia Seminary, editor of "Africa's Luminary," presiding elder of Cape Palmas district, and preacher in charge of Cape Palmas station. For six years he had been president of the Liberia Conference. On the occasion of his ordination he preached a sermon which, in the opinion of Janes, "would have been creditable to any of the bishops." He returned to Liberia, but his health failed and he died in 1863.

Waugh, the senior bishop, after an episcopal service of twenty-two years, died February 9, 1858. Porter, alluding to the glowing portraiture of his character by his colleagues, declares that it falls short of the truth, and that they might have added that he shone brighter in social life than in any other position, and there presented one of the most perfect models of a Christian gentleman. He was "one of the few Southern men who could oppose New England abolitionists and still command their love, though he could not control their sentiments or action."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Porter's "History of Methodism."

The most distinguished men participated in the discussions of slavery during the Conference of 1856; among them Miner Raymond, of the New England Conference, chairman of the Committee on Slavery; Collins, chairman of the minority which presented a report; Hiram Mattison, George R. Crooks, Edward Thomson, Abel Stevens, Samuel Y. Monroe, and Drs. George Peck, John Dempster, Israel Chamberlayne, and John McClintock.

“The indirect refusal to take up the report of slavery by laying on the table the preliminary motion to suspend the order of the day indicated that any further action on that subject was not practicable during that session of the General Conference. A large majority, one hundred and twenty-two, had recorded their names in favor of prohibiting all slave-holding by a change in the general rule with the concurring vote of the Annual Conferences. Of this number ninety-one were radical abolitionists and in favor of partial prohibition by direct and immediate legislation. Comparing the different votes taken by yeas and nays, three classes of voters are recorded—the conservatives, the constitutional abolitionists, and the radical abolitionists. The first class, numbering ninety-six, voted against all changes; the second, numbering in all thirty-one, to prevent prohibition of slave-holding by direct legislation united with the conservatives and threw the balance of power in favor of postponing further action, as before noted. Final antislavery action was thus deferred rather than defeated.”<sup>1</sup>

The controversy continued after the adjournment and occupied much space in church papers. The position strenuously maintained by Stevens, that slave-holders had a constitutional right to membership in the church, was

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph in the Methodist Episcopal Church," pp. 293, 294.

attacked by Professor W. L. Harris in a series of articles, afterward comprehended in a small work entitled "Powers of the General Conference." The substance of the argument was that the conference has full powers to make rules which do not revoke or change a general rule; that a statutory rule excluding slave-holders would not revoke or change any general rule; that if it had been the intention to guard by constitutional provision the question of slavery, it would have been done when, in 1808, the church met to frame the constitution; it was not done; hence he concluded that the General Conference had power to refuse to tolerate slavery any longer. Others argued that no change was necessary to give authority to exclude slave-holders. Daniel Wise, the new editor of the "Sunday-school Advocate," introduced short paragraphs against slavery and in favor of freedom. On this account he was assailed before Annual Conferences and threats were made that his paper would be ostracized. He replied: "The 'Advocate' is expected to teach our children the doctrines and ethics of our church; that slave-holding is a violation of Christian and Methodist ethics; and consequently it is my duty to teach the children to think of it as a sin; so long as I am editor of the paper I shall firmly but judiciously so instruct them. If the General Conference shall condemn my course it can, of course, replace me with another editor."

Hosmer, having been displaced by Hibbard, established the "Northern Independent," located at Auburn, N. Y. Hibbard took in substance the same position that Hosmer had taken, but in a more judicious tone.

During this period the number of those who held that it would be within the prerogative of the General Conference to pass a simple rule of discipline by which all slave-holders would be liable to expulsion increased rapidly;

but this view was powerfully antagonized by distinguished writers. Stevens compiled a pamphlet of fifty-eight pages of his editorials in the "Advocate" on "What the Next General Conference Should Do on the Question of Slavery." To this a reply was made by Dr. D. D. Whedon, appearing first in the New York "Tribune" and afterward in a pamphlet. But, though he held that an argument could be made showing the constitutionality of such a statute as many favored, he preferred the slow but sure constitutional process.

A Ministers' and Laymen's Union, of which Nathan Bangs was elected president, was established in 1859 at the session of the New York Conference, for the purpose of a canvass to protest against the proposed change in relation to slavery. Its statement of views and intent was answered by the Antislavery Society of the New York East Conference through an article written by Daniel Curry. Various forms for changing the general rule on slavery were submitted to the Annual Conferences, and before the Conference of 1860 they were designated by the names of the conferences which originated them: the Cincinnati rule forbade "the buying or selling of men, women, or children, or holding them with the intention of using them as slaves," the Providence would have prohibited "slave-holding, or buying or selling men, women, or children with the intention to enslave them," and the Erie would make the law read, "the buying, selling, holding, or transferring of any human being to be used in slavery." These were all defeated.

At the General Conference of 1860, which met in Buffalo, 139 memorials, signed by 3999 persons and 47 Quarterly Conferences, were presented, asking that no change be made in the Discipline on the subject of slavery. But 811 memorials, signed by 45,857 individuals

and from 49 Quarterly Meeting Conferences, asked that slavery might be extirpated from the church. After a long discussion the General Conference substituted in place of the chapter on slavery, which had come down from 1780, the following:

“*Question.* What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?”

“*Answer.* We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery. We believe that the buying, selling, or holding of human beings, to be used as chattels, is contrary to the laws of God and nature, inconsistent with the golden rule and with that rule in our Discipline which requires all who continue among us to ‘do no harm and to avoid evil of every kind.’ We, therefore, affectionately admonish all our preachers and people to keep themselves pure from this great evil, and to seek its extirpation by all lawful and Christian means.”

The paragraph refusing orders to local preachers who were slave-holders was expunged.

This conference urged the ministers and members of the church to coöperate in all proper efforts for securing in the several States laws that would effectually prohibit the traffic in intoxicating drinks; and, because of the adulteration of liquors, recommended the use of domestic wines for the sacrament; it denounced the practice which prevailed in some localities of keeping wine and ale for common family use, as well as the renting of places for the sale of intoxicating drinks, and the practice of selling grain where it was known that it would be used for the manufacture of such liquors; and instructed the ministers to enforce the provisions of the Discipline upon this subject, making it the duty of every presiding elder to inquire concerning it at every Quarterly Conference.

Lay delegation was extensively and earnestly debated, and the conference resolved: "We, the delegates of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General Conference assembled, hereby approve of the introduction of lay representation into this body when it shall be ascertained that the church desires it." It provided that all preachers in charge stationed within the United States and Territories be required to lay the subject of lay representation in the General Conference before the male members over twenty-one years of age, after notice in harmony with specified conditions, that they might express their wishes by casting ballots "for lay representation" or "against lay representation." This vote was to be taken in the interval between the Annual Conferences of 1861 and 1862. After this lay expression the same question was to be submitted to the Annual Conferences, and the bishops were instructed to report to the ensuing General Conference the result.

This conference had to consider the appeals of the Rev. Benjamin T. Roberts and others, growing out of an agitation in western New York, the germs of which appeared as early as 1850, but did not attract general attention till some years later, when an association of ministers was formed within the bounds of the Genesee Conference. They claimed that they had not been properly treated by the leading members of that body; that on account of their principles on certain subjects they were ostracized, and did not receive the personal or official consideration to which their characters and abilities entitled them. They were known as "Nazarites" and their association at first was secret.

So long as they confined themselves in their publications and addresses to complaining of the decline of spirituality in the church, of neglect of the Discipline, and of the ignor-



ing of some of the fundamental doctrines of Methodism, and to bearing testimony against the sins of the church, they were not amenable to discipline. But when they made specific charges against prominent members of the conference they became subjects of investigation. The Rev. Benjamin T. Roberts was adjudged guilty, in 1857, of immoral and unchristian conduct growing out of these charges, and sentenced to be reprimanded by the bishop presiding. As he made no change in his course during the intervening year, at the next conference he was charged with contumacy and expelled from the church. Similar proceedings were taken against others.

Against both these decisions Roberts appealed to the General Conference. This action was taken :

“ The committee having heard and considered the minutes, documents, and pleadings in the first appeal case of Benjamin T. Roberts, who appeals from the decision of the Genesee Conference whereby he was adjudged to be reprimanded before the conference, proceeded to vote in the case with the following result : On the question of affirming, nineteen voted in favor and nineteen against it. On the question of remanding the case for a new trial, the committee voted almost unanimously in the negative. On the question of reversing the action of the conference, eighteen voted in favor and twenty against, a result which, as the General Conference has decided, leaves the decision of the Genesee Conference as the final adjudication of the case.

“ J. T. CRANE, *Secretary*.

“ The committee have considered the second appeal of B. T. Roberts, who appeals from the action of the Genesee Conference whereby he was expelled from the ministry and the church.

“The representatives of the Genesee Conference objected to the admission of the appeal on the ground:

“1. That B. T. Roberts subsequently to his trial and condemnation joined the Methodist Episcopal Church as a probationer, and thus, at least tacitly, confessed the justice of the action of the conference on his case.

“2. That B. T. Roberts since he was deprived by his expulsion of his ministerial authority and standing has continued to preach and has thus rebelled against the authority of the conference and the church.

“3. That B. T. Roberts since he declared his intention of appealing to the General Conference has connected himself with another organization, contemplating church ends independent of and hostile to the church to whose General Conference he now appeals.

“The committee, after hearing the statements and pleadings of the representatives of the parties,

“*Resolved*, That the appeal of B. T. Roberts be not admitted.”

Similar action was taken in the case of William Cooley.<sup>1</sup>

The ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church who sympathized with them met in convention in Pekin, Niagara County, N. Y., on the 23d of August, 1860, and organized the Free Methodist Church, adopting, with slight modifications, the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but in government provided that the members should have an equal voice with the ministers in the councils of the church.

The publishing agents at New York remained the same, but in Cincinnati Luke Hitchcock took the place of Swormstedt; Edward Thomson that of Stevens as editor of the “Christian Advocate and Journal”; the “National Magazine” had ceased to exist; Isaac S. Bingham took the

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference for 1860,” p. 253.

place of Hibbard as editor of the "Northern Christian Advocate"; Samuel H. Nesbit, of Baird, editor of the Pittsburg; Charles Elliott, of Brooks, editor of the Central. William L. Harris was elected assistant corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society.

Soon after the adjournment of the conference, the "Methodist," a weekly paper, was established in the city of New York by an association of ministers and laymen. George R. Crooks, with whom Abel Stevens was afterward associated, was editor, assisted by an able staff of contributing editors. It took a conservative position upon the slavery question, was devoted chiefly to the advocacy of lay representation, and speedily obtained a very large circulation, which materially diminished the patronage of the "Christian Advocate."

Two of the border conferences repudiated the new statute adopted by the Conference of 1860. The Baltimore by a unanimous vote determined "not to hold connection with any ecclesiastical body that makes non-slaveholding a condition of membership in the church." At a preachers' meeting held September 14, 1860, in Wesley Chapel, after a formal complaint against the action of the General Conference on the subject of slavery, a plan was proposed for concentrating at the following General Conference the conservative element of the church, and among the demands to be made were a repudiation of the new chapter and the placing of the control of the question with the Annual Conferences. A convention of laymen from within the bounds of the Baltimore, East Baltimore, Philadelphia, and West Virginia conferences was held on the 5th of December at the Eutaw Street Church in Baltimore. A delegation was present from New York on the 6th. Of the one hundred and sixteen churches in the Baltimore Conference, sixty-three were represented. An ad-

dress to the conference named was adopted, urging it to sever its connection with the General Conference.

Agitation arose in that part of the Philadelphia Conference known as the Peninsula, suggesting negotiations with the Baltimore and other border conferences. The subject was discussed at the Baltimore Conference without bringing matters to an issue; but Bishop Scott declined to ordain a candidate for elder's orders because he publicly excepted to the new chapter, stating the ground of his action in these words: "I regard myself restrained from ordaining any one who declines to take upon him the ordination vows without qualification or exception."

At the same time a convention of laymen, by a vote of ninety-one to thirty-two, passed resolutions recommending the adoption of resolutions to the effect that the unconstitutional action of the General Conference had destroyed the unity of the church, and that the Baltimore Conference does not recognize its jurisdiction. Should three quarters of the Annual Conferences within a year agree with it in abrogating the new chapter and in ignoring the whole subject of slavery in the Discipline, the Baltimore Conference would reunite with them in church-fellowship.

Scott refused to entertain motions relating to a division of the church, but subsequently allowed the secretary to put the question on the adoption of a similar series of propositions. On resuming the chair he ordered a paper to be spread on the "Journal" declaring the action null and void regarded as conference action, and proceed to finish the business of the session. One hundred and thirty-two of the one hundred and seventy-one members of the conference were present; eighty-three voted for immediate separation.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the border excitement prevailed, and it spread to all parts of the church.

<sup>1</sup> Matlack.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE FRATRICIDAL WAR AND ITS SEQUELS.

THE state of the country became alarming. Discussions, of which the institution of slavery was the center, had necessitated its introduction into national politics, where it was complicated with the controversy upon the fundamental question as to whether the national government is a federal union of States or a federal union of the people. The relation of slavery to the Territories became a burning issue, upon which the newly formed Republican party took the ground that slavery had no constitutional standing in the Territories. The Democratic party divided between the followers of Douglas, who held that the people of the Territories should have the right to decide for themselves, and the main body, which declared that slave-holders settling in the Territories had a constitutional right to take with them their property in slaves.

The failure of the Republican party to elect John C. Fremont President did not give rest to the country, and a bitterness was engendered which could have but one result. The effort of the Union party, which nominated John Bell, of Tennessee, and Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, respectively for President and Vice-President, as an attempt to cast oil upon the troubled waters, though patriotic in purpose, was a failure.

The election of Abraham Lincoln in November, 1860, brought to a crisis the explosive elements which had been gathering beneath the surface of a wonderful national prosperity. When Fort Sumter was fired upon the distinction between conservatives and radicals in the Methodist Episcopal Church relatively to slavery disappeared.

The records of the Baltimore Conference show that sixty-six ministers of that body had withdrawn, headed by John S. Martin, the secretary, who carried the archives with him. The minutes contain the declaration made by them on the twenty-third day of March, 1861, and state that "if any of the above-named brethren be present and coöperate in the business of the conference at its next session, or shall sooner signify to the bishops their acknowledgments of the jurisdiction of the church, this conference will consider their act of withdrawal as null and void."

No returns were received at that conference from the Winchester, Lewisburg, Roanoke, Rockingham, and Potomac districts, which, the preceding year, had reported 16,756 members and 2193 probationers. These districts were afterward formed into a district of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The next year a new district, entitled the Virginia, was formed, with John Lanahan as presiding elder. It consisted of only seven appointments, but the minutes contain a significant addendum: "Other appointments in the Virginia work will be announced as circumstances may require." The record of the Baltimore Conference for 1863 shows a decrease of 21,065 members.

The Rev. Anthony Bewley, who was a member of the General Conference of that year from Arkansas, and who joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1848, was hung by a mob on the 13th of September, 1866, at Fort Worth, Tex. He had been falsely charged with promoting an insurrection in Texas, and, not desiring trouble, had de-

parted from the State, but was pursued by his antagonists and brought back. So great was the prejudice against the Methodist Episcopal Church as an abolition body that on Sunday, the 13th of the preceding March, while Bishop Janes was conducting the Arkansas Conference and was about to preach, Judge Roberts, accompanied by a mob, entered the church and notified the bishop to leave within two hours, declaring that if that church did not cease its work in Texas "blood would be shed, and the responsibility would be on the bishop and conference."

The conferences, in most instances without a dissenting voice, passed resolutions pledging their influence to encourage and assist the army and navy to maintain the Union.

The Central Ohio Conference in 1861 passed resolutions contemplating the proclamation of universal freedom as the only solution of the existing difficulties. The same body forwarded a resolution, passed at Greenville, September 22, 1862, declaring: "We believe the time is fully come when, from a material necessity for the safety of the country, such a proclamation should be made; and we earnestly beseech the President of the United States to proclaim the emancipation of all slaves held in the United States, paying loyal men a reasonable compensation for their slaves." Before the communication reached Washington the President had issued a proclamation, to go into effect the first day of the new year.

A circumstance which Bishop McTyeire<sup>1</sup> declares made a deep wound is thus described by him: "After the federal forces had occupied large sections of Southern territory, Bishop Ames, with preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, followed the victorious army with an order procured from Secretary of War Stanton, and

<sup>1</sup> In his history.

took forcible possession of Southern Methodist pulpits, even to the exclusion of ministers appointed by the church authorities and desired by the congregation." The language of the order referred to by Bishop McTyeire, so far as it related to the headquarters of the Department of the Gulf, required that all houses of worship within that department belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, "in which a loyal minister who has been appointed by a loyal bishop of the said church does not now officiate, are hereby placed at the disposal of the Rev. Bishop Ames." It further ordered the "commanding officers at the various points where such houses of worship may be located" to extend to the ministers appointed by Bishop Ames all the aid, countenance, and support practicable, and the officers of the quartermaster's department were authorized and directed to furnish Bishop Ames and his clerk with transportation and subsistence, "when it can be done without prejudice to the service." The date of this order was January 18, 1864.

This simply made loyalty to the Union in the conquered portions of the South a test of the right to hold public services, and under the circumstances practically put all churches under the control of Bishop Ames. On the resumption of civil authority and the beginning of reconstruction throughout the land, it gave way. The first church established by the Methodist Episcopal Church in New Orleans for Anglo-Saxon members after the war was named Ames Church.

The General Conference of 1864 assembled in Philadelphia.

The Baltimore Conference, shorn of its strength by so large a secession, had but three representatives, at the head of whom was John Lanahan, the intrepid presiding elder of the district of Virginia. The atmosphere of the



national conflict pervaded the assembly, and by unanimous vote the trustees of the church were requested to display above the building the flag of the United States. Elliott, of the "Central Christian Advocate" at St. Louis, Mo., had received from the loyal women of St. Louis the gift of a flag, and the conference voted that it be suspended in the church during the deliberations of the body.

The following resolutions were adopted by a vote of two hundred and seven to nine:

"That we recommend the amendment of the general rule on slavery so that it shall read, 'Slave-holding, buying or selling slaves.'

"That we recommend the suspension of the Fourth Restrictive Rule for the purpose set forth in the foregoing resolution."

The bishops were instructed to submit these resolutions to the Annual Conferences, and if the requisite number of votes were obtained, to insert the new rule in subsequent editions of the Discipline.

The minority desired to amend the rule so as to make it read, "The selling of human beings, or the buying or holding of them, except for reasons purely humane."

By a vote of one hundred and sixty-five to forty-eight, the word "two," in the limitations of the bishops in the power to appoint ministers, was changed to "three." The minority consisted of those who were opposed to any increase, together with a few who desired all limitation removed. The conference also empowered the bishops to appoint ministers to certain specialties for a longer time than three years.

Joseph A. Wright, ex-governor of Indiana, Governor Cannon of Delaware, Dr. James Strong, C. C. North, and John Elliott, of New York, Cornelius Walsh of New Jersey, Thomas Kneil of Massachusetts, G. C. Cooke of Illinois,

and Oliver Hoyt of Connecticut, deputed by a convention just held in Philadelphia, appeared before the conference, and Strong, the secretary, read an address upon lay delegation, in which the method of taking the vote upon the subject was criticised as inadequate to ascertain the true sense of the laity, and asking special attention to the subject of introducing lay representation, which, the convention affirmed, stood firmly on Methodist, Protestant, and Scriptural ground, and would give to the Christian world a new guaranty of the perpetuity of Methodism, since it agreed with primitive usage and is the distinctive mark of Protestant Christianity.

The committee which was appointed to convey to the President of the United States its sympathies and approbation made a verbal report through Bishop Ames, who presented the following autograph letter from Abraham Lincoln:

“GENTLEMEN: In response to your address, allow me to attest the accuracy of its historical statements, indorse the sentiments it expresses, and thank you in the nation’s name for the sure promise it gives.

“Nobly sustained as the government has been by all the churches, I would utter nothing which might in the least appear invidious against any. Yet without this it may fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is by its greater numbers the most important of all. It is no fault in others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any. God bless the Methodist Church! bless all the churches! and blessed be God, who in this our great trial giveth us the churches.

“ (Signed)

A. LINCOLN ”

A change which had the practical effect of rendering attendance upon the class-meeting voluntary was made in the chapter relating to the means of grace.

Provision was made for the constitution of a General Board of Trustees, to hold in trust for the benefit of the Methodist Episcopal Church any and all donations, bequests, and grants made to the church without special designation or direction.

The most important practical innovation was without doubt the establishment of the Church Extension Society, to be located at Philadelphia, its purpose "to secure suitable houses of public worship and such other church property as may promote the general design." Its constitution provided the usual officers, and vested its property in a board of managers lay and clerical. Its corresponding secretary was to be appointed by the General Conference, and its general supervision was to be under the control of a general committee consisting of one representative from each General Conference district. A. J. Kynett, delegate from the Upper Iowa Conference, who had been secretary of a society for the purpose in Iowa, was foremost in directing the attention of the conference to the subject and in perfecting the constitution. Samuel Y. Monroe, D.D., of the New Jersey Conference, was appointed its first corresponding secretary, and the enterprise was initiated with enthusiasm.

Elaborate provisions were made for the celebration in 1866 of the centennial of American Methodism. A committee consisting of twelve traveling preachers and twelve laymen was to be appointed, two departments of Christian enterprise were to be placed before the people,—one connective, central, and monumental, the other local and distributive,—and the people were to be urged to make liberal contributions to both at their own discretion. The

committee of ministers and laymen, on motion of Monroe, was empowered to determine to what objects and in what proportion the money raised as connectional funds should be appropriated, and to take steps necessary to the proper distribution. An invitation was given to all branches of the Methodist family in this and other lands to unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the centennial celebration.

Davis Wasgatt Clark, Edward Thomson, and Calvin Kingsley were elected to the episcopacy. Clark was a native of the island of Mount Desert, Maine. Educated as Congregationalists, his parents in 1815, when he was three years old, were converted under the preaching of a Freewill Baptist evangelist who visited the island. With a view to permanently occupying it, the island was visited for the first time by a Methodist preacher in 1828. By his labors Clark was led to join a Methodist class. At the age of nineteen he became a student in the Maine Wesleyan Seminary, in 1834 he entered Wesleyan University in advance, and in two years was graduated Bachelor of Arts. For seven years thereafter he was connected with Amenia Seminary in New York, for two as assistant teacher in mathematics, and for five as principal instructor in philosophy and English literature. He entered upon the regular work of the ministry in 1843, and became well known as a newspaper correspondent and as an author. He had been editor of the "Ladies' Repository" for twelve years when elected bishop. During this period he published "Death-bed Scenes," "Celebrated Women," "Home Views," and "Man all Immortal."

Thomson was born in England October 12, 1810. He left his native country when seven years old, coming to America with his parents, brothers and sisters. He was graduated in medicine before he was twenty-one, but while studying became imbued with doubt on the subject

of religion. He practiced his profession twelve years, but was religiously impressed by the sermons of Sheldon, his pastor, and some years afterward by a sermon of amazing force and earnestness preached by Russel Bigelow; and, much to the dislike of his father, who was a lay officer in the Presbyterian Church, he joined the Methodists, soon began to preach, rapidly rose, and almost rivaled Summerfield in popularity. He turned aside to educational work and wrote upon the subject; his essays were published in the United States and in England, and Michigan offered him the chancellorship of her university. He was elected editor of the "Ladies' Repository" in 1844. Soon he was called to the headship of the Ohio Wesleyan University, where his success transcended that of any college president in Methodism since the days of Fisk, Durbin, and Olin. At the time of his election to the episcopacy he was editor of the "Christian Advocate and Journal."

Kingsley was preëminently self-made. He was born in western New York, and at the age of eighteen became a Christian and a Methodist; at twenty-four he entered Allegheny College, having for a long time supported himself by teaching and other work, preparing himself for college by night study. In five years he worked his way through the scientific course, was graduated with honor, immediately elected assistant professor of mathematics, and the next year made full professor. The college being obliged to suspend on account of the loss of State aid, he entered the pastorate.

In the antislavery controversy he attained fame as a debater, and devoted his powers in that art to vindicating orthodox Christianity against Unitarianism and the doctrine of the resurrection against Bush, the Swedenborgian. When elected bishop he had been for eight years editor of the "Western Christian Advocate."

J. M. Trimble was made assistant corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, Daniel Curry editor of the "Christian Advocate and Journal," B. F. Crary of the Central, J. M. Reid of the Western, H. C. Benson of the Pacific, and D. D. Lore of the "Northern Christian Advocate."

The vote upon the subject of lay delegation during the preceding quadrennium was, of the ministers, 1338 for and 3069 against; of the male members, 28,884 for and 47,855 against. The Kentucky Conference was not reported.

The bishops in their address called attention to the fact that the progress of the federal arms had thrown open to the loyal churches of the Union new fields of Christian enterprise and labor, which for nineteen years had been in the occupancy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, except at certain points where they had penetrated that territory, as the Methodist Episcopal Church claimed that the Southern church had disregarded the Plan of Separation and on that account had themselves declared that plan null and void. The bishops further affirmed that the church should never have been excluded from that portion of the United States, and should never have consented on any ground to such exclusion. They suggested that in advancing in the South the church should go preaching Christ, and him crucified, to all classes of people, welcoming back such ministers and members as were cut off from their communion without their voluntary act; yet avowed it to be their solemn judgment that none should be admitted who were either slave-holders or tainted with treason.

As a result of the comparison of the statistics of 1863 with those of 1859, they were obliged to report a decrease of 50,951 members and probationers. Of these many had

been killed in battle or died from illness and wounds during the war.

The Liberia Conference was authorized to elect an elder to take the place made vacant by the death of Bishop Burns. John Wright Roberts was chosen, and came to New York for ordination, which was conferred June 20, 1866, in St. Paul's Church, New York. Roberts was the son of a woman who had escaped from slavery, and who, under the direction of the Colonization Society, went to Liberia, taking her children with her. There her three sons joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. The eldest became governor of the colony and was the first president of the republic; the youngest read medicine, attended lectures in New York, and was graduated with honor. John Wright Roberts studied theology under the direction of the preacher in charge of Monrovia, and was ordained elder in 1841. Bishop Scott visited Liberia in 1853 and met Roberts, by whom he was favorably impressed. His selection by the Liberia Conference for ordination as successor of Burns received Scott's full indorsement, and, assisted by Janes, he ordained him.

After the General Conference Clark went South, endeavoring to reconstruct the Methodist Episcopal Church in that part of the country. Several conferences had been formed in the South, such as the Kentucky, the Missouri, the Arkansas, and the Western Virginia. Clark organized the Holston Conference at Athens, Tenn., in June, 1865, the nucleus being six ministers transferred from the North; forty-two were admitted, thirty-two from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, several of them aged men whose ministerial life antedated the division. The Mississippi Conference was organized in September of the same year. The South Carolina and the Tennessee were organized in 1866, and on January 3, 1867, the Texas was formed,

the Georgia October 10th, and the Alabama October 17th. At the session of the Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, September, 1865, eighteen ministers, among whom were some of marked ability, withdrew and were received as local preachers in a Quarterly Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at the ensuing session of the Kentucky Conference were received into full connection and duly appointed.

The local troubles attending the spread of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Southern States at that time were neither greater nor less than might have been expected in view of the history of the churches and of the country, the situation, and the state of the public mind in the North and South respectively.

The Missionary Society appropriated ten thousand dollars to be at the disposal of Bishop Clark for the establishment of a school for freedmen. It was located at Nashville, Tenn., and was opened in January, 1866, under the charge of the Rev. John Seys and the Rev. O. O. Knight. The government fitted up an armory which had been abandoned by the soldiers of the Confederacy upon the approach of the federal army, and through the action of the Freedmen's Bureau turned it over to this school, which in its second year had eight hundred pupils. Nashville, however, soon provided public instruction for colored children, which led to the transformation of this school into a college for the higher education of the negro, which was chartered in 1866, and the following year began its career as the Central Tennessee College. Under the presidency of John Braden this has developed into an institution commanding universal respect. Besides the ordinary college faculty, it has theological, medical, law, and industrial departments.

The general committee, appointed by the General Con-



ference of 1864 to arrange for the centennial celebration, met in Cleveland, O., in February, 1865. Abel Stevens was requested to prepare a centennial volume, and John McClintock to add a chapter explaining the action of the committee. A central committee consisting of Drs. McClintock, Curry, and Crooks, Oliver Hoyt, James Bishop, and Charles C. North was empowered to make all necessary arrangements. The propositions which they submitted to the church were: "That the Centenary Educational Fund should be placed before the people as the prominent object for connectional contributions, and that if any contributors desired to specify the objects of their subscriptions in whole or in part, they should have the liberty to select from any one of the following interests: 1. The Centenary Educational Fund. 2. The Garrett Biblical School at Evanston. 3. The Methodist General Biblical Institute at Concord, to be removed to the vicinity of Boston. 4. A Biblical Institute in the Eastern Middle States. 5. A Biblical Institute in Cincinnati or vicinity. 6. A Biblical Institute on the Pacific coast. Contributions to the last three objects should be retained and managed by the Educational Board until they were sure that enough had been actually raised from other sources to make the aggregate amount, including the connectional contributions, for these respective objects not less than \$150,000 in each case. 7. The erection of a centenary missionary building for the Mission House at New York. 8. The Irish Connectional Fund. 9. The Biblical School at Bremen, Germany. 10. The Chartered Fund. There was added to these objects the Sunday-school Children's Fund."

The Annual Conferences provided for the delivery on the first Sabbath of January, 1866, of memorial sermons and for prayer for God's blessing upon the church. The thank-offerings of the people, as reported to the General

Conference of 1868, amounted to \$8,709,498.39, and to this sum a considerable amount was subsequently added. The church at large did not share the view of the committee that the principal donations should be connectional as distinguished from local; hence the bishops in their report say, "While some noble donations were made to the Mission House, to the General Educational Fund, and to the Irish and German funds, the larger part of the contributions were given to colleges and seminaries, and for the erection and improvement of church edifices and parsonages." The sums contributed for the Irish and German funds, for the Sunday-school Children's Fund, for Concord and Garrett Biblical Institutes, Drew Theological Seminary, and the Mission House reached considerably over \$1,000,000. Daniel Drew, a layman of St. Paul's Church in the city of New York, gave about \$600,000 at different times, of which \$500,000 were included in this report, as was "Heck Hall," erected by the Garrett Biblical Institute in honor of Barbara Heck.

Notwithstanding these extraordinary contributions, the receipts of the Missionary Society showed an unparalleled increase; \$1,304,507 more than had been received in any preceding quadrennium were given in that which closed with the General Conference of 1868. When it is considered that in the earlier part of this period the people were giving liberally to the Christian and Sanitary Commissions, and in the latter part to the Freedmen's Aid and Church Extension Societies, this may well be characterized as "an era of benevolence."

A number of those ministers who seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and who with Scott and others founded the Wesleyan Connection in 1843, returned in 1867 to the Methodist Episcopal Church, among them the celebrated debater and theologian, Luther Lee, the

ever-respected Cyrus Prindle, and the historian of "The Antislavery Struggle and Triumph in the Methodist Episcopal Church," Lucius C. Matlack.

The General Conference of 1868 met in Chicago, Ill. Several circumstances justified the statement of the bishops in their address, that never in the history of the church had a General Conference convened under more favorable circumstances. The war had ended, slavery had perished, and in the last four years there had been a gain in the South of 550 traveling preachers and 117,326 members; 27,225 members and 177 traveling preachers had been added to the conferences in Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas, and above 20,000 members and nearly 7000 probationers were included in the colored conferences established by authority of the Conference of 1864. The number of members and probationers at the close of 1867 was 1,146,081, an increase of 222,687, the largest in the history of the church, with one exception, namely, the last quadrennium of the united church, when the increase was more than 375,000.

The first question of importance was, whether provisional delegates, chosen by the mission conferences organized in the South during and after the war under the instructions of the last General Conference, should be admitted. After protracted debate and various attempts to harmonize the sentiment of the body, resolutions were passed repealing the action of the General Conference of 1864, restricting, or purporting to restrict, the rights and privileges of the Annual Conferences which the bishops were authorized to form within the United States and Territories, declaring the conferences so formed to be Annual Conferences vested with all the rights, privileges, and immunities usual to such conferences, and admitting the provisional delegates elected by them, after their credentials should

have been approved by a committee appointed for the purpose. Similar action was taken late in the session concerning all action of previous General Conferences restricting the powers of mission conferences, and the conferences of Liberia, Germany, Switzerland, and India were declared Annual Conferences. Pursuant to these resolutions, a delegate from India was admitted, making an addition of twelve members to the body and determining the policy of the church upon a momentous subject.

William Morley Punshon represented the British Wesleyan Conference, and made an extraordinary impression upon the conference in Chicago and subsequently throughout the United States.

The conference received a deputation of eminent laymen asking for lay representation. They were invited to the platform, and on the 18th of May were introduced to the conference by the president, and presented their address, which was read and ordered to be printed. The force which the movement had gathered can be inferred from the character of the men who appeared on that occasion. Among them were Isaac Rich, Governor William Claflin of Massachusetts, Amos Shinkle of Covington, Ky., John Owen of Detroit, F. H. Root of Buffalo, John Evans of Colorado, Andrew V. Stout of New York, Oliver Hoyt of Connecticut, and General Clinton B. Fisk, the president of the convention.

At a later period a deputation of laymen, representing a committee on behalf of members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at that time in Chicago, was received in a similar manner; they submitted an address protesting against the introduction of lay delegation and assuring the conference that the laymen signing it doubted the constitutional right of the body to make the proposed change without previously altering the restrictive rule. Among

these were George J. Hamilton of New York City, Samuel Preston of Vermont, and William H. Whitehead of Chicago.

Nearly the entire conference was ready to grant lay representation when it should be ascertained that the people desired it, but a radical division of sentiment appeared as to the authority of the General Conference, though a large number of the members assumed that to make the change was within its constitutional powers. A standing committee on lay representation was appointed, including most of the strongest men in the conference, and E. O. Haven was elected its chairman. On the twenty-second day majority and minority reports were presented. The majority held in substance that the conference possessed and should then and there exercise the power to enact a statute providing for the admission of laymen. The minority held that the Second Restrictive Rule must be changed before such a statute could be constitutionally enacted.

The debate was commensurate with the importance of the subject and continued for several days. It being found impossible to agree, a committee of conference was appointed, including members of the majority and the minority, with additions. Their report as amended was adopted by a vote of two hundred and thirty-one; there were three votes in the negative, and eight members were absent.

The resolutions were: "That the General Conference declares its readiness to admit lay delegates whenever the people desire it, and recommends to the godly consideration of the ministers and members a change of the Discipline, particularly the restrictive rule providing that the General Conference shall be composed of ministerial and lay delegates, the lay to consist of two laymen for each Annual Conference, except such Annual Conferences as

have but one ministerial delegate, which shall have one lay delegate." It also provided for a lay electoral conference whereby the laymen were to be elected, and for the submission in the month of June, 1869, of the subject for an expression of opinion by the laity; and it provided for the election in the several places of worship of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at which members in full connection and not less than twenty-one years old were to be invited to vote by ballot for or against lay delegation. It further provided that the bishops at the several Annual Conferences, at their first sessions after the above elections, should lay the necessary changes in the Second Restrictive Rule before these bodies, so that the rule should be altered in harmony with the proposition so as to read "the conference shall be composed of ministerial and lay delegates." The resolution was: "Should a majority of the votes cast by the people be in favor of lay delegation, and should three quarters of the Annual Conferences vote in favor of the proposed change in the constitution of the church, then the General Conference of 1872, by the requisite two-thirds vote, can complete the change, and lay delegates previously elected may then be admitted."

A commission was appointed, to be known as the commissioners for the buildings of the Book Concern, Missionary Society, and other institutions of the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York.

John Lanahan was elected to take the place of Porter in the Book Concern in New York, J. M. Walden that of Poe in Cincinnati. S. M. Merrill succeeded Reid as editor of the *Western*, Reid, Eddy in the *Northwestern*, H. C. Benson, Thomas as editor of the *California*, and Isaac Dillon, Benson as editor of the "*Pacific Christian Advocate*." Daniel Wise was elected editor of the "*Sunday-school Advocate*" and library books, and John H. Vincent editor

of the "Sunday-school Journal" and books of instruction. Samuel Y. Monroe, corresponding secretary of the Church Extension Society, had lost his life in February, 1867, by falling from a train while on his way to present the cause to a church in Brooklyn, N. Y. A. J. Kynett, who had been previously selected by the bishops to fill the vacancy caused by his death, and who had entered upon his duties July 1, 1867, was elected corresponding secretary of that society.

Propositions looking toward a union with the Methodist Episcopal Church were received from the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. As a result of these communications the conference ordered the appointment of a commission to confer with a like commission from the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and arrange for the union of that body with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and empowered it to treat with a similar commission from any other Methodist church that desired like union.

A petition was received from the Rev. L. C. Matlack and fifteen of the official members of the church of which he was pastor at Elkton, Md., requesting the General Conference to rescind the resolutions passed by the General Conference of 1836 censuring certain of its members for lecturing on and in favor of modern abolitionism, and in particular for attending an abolition convention in Cincinnati during the session of the conference. Such action was taken. The Rev. Samuel Norris, who with George Storrs had been censured by these resolutions, survived to see them rescinded.

The perpetuation of the Board of Education, which had been provisionally formed, was provided for by the adoption of the report of the committee on education presented by John McClintock, chairman. Its duty as prescribed in the report was "to invest the principal of the Centenary

Educational Fund, and to appropriate the interest in order to help young men preparing for the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church and for its foreign missionary work, and to aid the biblical and theological schools already in existence, and such as may with the approval of the General Conference hereafter be established, and to aid universities, colleges, and academies now existing, and those which may hereafter be founded under the patronage of the church." Future contributions were to be held in trust by the board for the assistance of the needy and worthy seeking an education in the church, or for specific educational purposes, as the donors or the conferences whence the contributions came should direct. Certain restrictions guarding the integrity of the fund were introduced into the charter.

The Methodist Episcopal Church previous to 1866 had coöperated with various societies established for the care and instruction of the freedmen, but in that year the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was duly organized in Cincinnati, and in 1866 and 1867 it received the cordial approval of the Annual Conferences. This General Conference on the 1st of June recognized the society, sanctioned its organization, approved its objects, commended it to the liberal support of the people, recommended the conferences to place it upon the list of annual contributions, and authorized the bishops to appoint a traveling preacher as corresponding secretary. In harmony with this action, Richard S. Rust, who had been connected with the organization prior to its recognition by the General Conference, was chosen corresponding secretary. The liberality of the church was marked even before this, for at the end of the first year it had received \$37,139.89. During the first two years it received some aid from the Freedmen's Bureau.



The church now entered upon a remarkable career of educational development. Boston University was chartered in 1869, Isaac Rich, Lee Claflin, and Jacob Sleeper being associated in its foundation. Rich was a native of Wellfleet, Mass. He became a member of the church when twenty years of age, and accumulated a large fortune as a merchant. Bereaved of his children, he concentrated his affections upon the church, and began to give early in life, bestowing large sums upon Wesleyan Academy and Wesleyan University, at the latter erecting a beautiful library hall. Claflin also was a liberal patron of these institutions, and of the school of theology of Boston University. He contributed extensively to the establishment of a seminary at Orangeville, S. C., now known as the Claflin University. Sleeper was a banker and a native of Maine; he removed to Boston in 1825 and was closely connected with every noble enterprise of the church and city. He was at one time mayor, and was deeply interested in Harvard University, having been twelve years a member of its board of overseers. While the names of these men must be connected forever with the great institution which they founded, there were others, lay and clerical, without whose aid it could never have been established.

Syracuse University was chartered in 1870 and opened for students in 1871. It is the successor of Genesee College. The plan of establishing in the city of Syracuse or immediate vicinity a first-class university was approved at a convention of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at Syracuse in February, 1870, and steps ordered to be taken to raise three hundred thousand dollars for its endowment. The brothers Remington, of Ilion, each gave one hundred thousand dollars, and Jesse T. Peck, who presided, subscribed twenty-five thousand dollars. Subscriptions were made without regard to denomination; a

large sum was given by the Hon. George F. Constock, of Syracuse.

During the four years succeeding the General Conference of 1868 the Methodist Episcopal Church was greatly bereaved. Bishop Baker, who had suffered from partial paralysis for some years, died on the 8th of December, 1871.

Dr. John McClintock, president of Drew Theological Seminary, the most universally accomplished man American Methodism had produced, writer, author, translator, editor, and preacher, and who, while in Paris during the Civil War as pastor of the American chapel, so commanded the confidence of President Lincoln that he declared him to be worthy for the position of minister to France, died on the 4th of March, 1870, at the age of fifty-five.

Charles Elliott, author and editor, missionary to the Indians and college professor, who took a prominent part in nine consecutive General Conferences, and had edited three of the "Advocates," finished his useful but somewhat stormy career on January 6, 1869.

Bishop Clark, who was in his usual vigor until the close of the year 1869, rapidly failed in the spring of 1870, and on April 6, 1871, after administering the communion at the New York Conference, of which he had been so long a member, and making a touching address, he called Bishop Simpson to the chair and retired. It was his last public effort, and he died on the 23d of May.

Bishop Kingsley had been appointed to visit the missions in China and India, and in returning went to the Holy Land. Accompanied by H. Bannister, of the Garrett Biblical Institute, who was then in Beirut, on the morning of April 6, 1870, he ascended to the top of the house to view the heights of Lebanon. After breakfast he was attacked with heart disease and died in a few

minutes. Over his tomb in Beirut stands a monument erected by American Methodists.

Bishop Thomson died of pneumonia at Wheeling, W. Va., March 22, 1870. By his death a vacancy was made which no one man could fill. Porter judiciously observes that "he was a man of deep piety, fine taste, tender heart, extensive reading, a charming preacher and writer, and generally beloved. He lived just at the time and place where his rare talents were needed and could be turned to the best account."

During this quadrennium a controversy arose in the Book Concern at New York which seriously agitated the entire denomination, occasioning acrimonious discussion in the church papers and much scandal.

Lanahan, the new assistant agent, on assuming his duties found the business moving in well-worn ruts. A certain proportion of the letters were daily placed upon his desk, but no special work of importance seemed to fall naturally into his hands. Every department had a head, either real or nominal. He therefore set himself to master the workings of those departments which had been specially under the care of his predecessor, and had not proceeded far before he discovered what seemed to him serious irregularities in the printing and bindery departments. Speaking with frankness to the agent, he did not receive the coöperation which he expected. He found also that the subordinates whose methods he was studying were apprised that he was in pursuit of them. This increased his vigilance and activity, and rumors, some of which exaggerated and others distorted the facts, spread abroad through the paper, ink, leather, and various other trades. The newspapers began to publish allegations of fraud and defalcations in the Methodist Book Concern.

Publicity aggravated the situation and divided the

church into factions. The agent maintained that the methods of his coadjutor were harsh and uncharitable and that his accusations were not always sustained. Various general officers of the church sympathized with this view, as well as most of the editors of the church papers, and the detector of frauds found himself an object of contumely as an accuser of the brethren.

The Book Committee was convened; the assistant agent presented his case, and the committee speedily divided, a majority of more than two thirds supporting the agent, the remainder approving the work of the assistant agent. The ablest men of the committee were represented in the minority as well as in the majority. Both reports were sent out to the Annual Conferences, where in most cases the majority report was treated with respect and that of the minority laid on the table.

The assistant agent was suspended and put on trial before the Book Committee and the bishops, whose concurrent action was necessary to convict. Before the completion of the first trial the charges were withdrawn.

Subsequently a peculiar controversy arose between the agent and the assistant book agent. The latter had demanded access to the books and proposed to take them aside to be investigated by experts. The agent refused to surrender them for the purpose, and the assistant appealed to the Supreme Court of the State of New York for an injunction to compel him to do so. For thus taking the affairs of the church into the civil courts he was suspended and put upon trial before the committee.

When the proceedings began the prosecution was represented by the Hon. E. L. Fancher and the Hon. Theodore Runyon, and the defendant by the Hon. George G. Reynolds, of Brooklyn, and J. M. Buckley. The committee first decided that the proceedings should take place in

private. This led the counsel for the defendant to add to their number the Rev. George R. Crooks, editor of the "Methodist," the Rev. Franklin Ward of Baltimore (an expert stenographer), the Rev. John S. Porter of New Jersey, and the following laymen: John A. Wright and Thomas W. Price of Philadelphia, and John Elliott and Oliver Hoyt of New York. Whereupon the committee voted that the proceedings should take place in open session and that reporters of the daily press should be admitted.

The result of the second trial was that the majority of the committee found the defendant guilty of having taken the affairs of the church into the civil courts, and decided that he should be removed from his office. Bishops Janes and Ames divided; the former paid a high tribute to Lanahan, who, he intimated, had made important discoveries, but also stated that after long hesitation he had reached the conclusion that it was his duty to concur with the vote of the committee removing him. Ames declined to do this. As the law required that at least two bishops should concur in the finding, this result left the assistant agent in possession of his office.

Meanwhile the subject of lay representation was before the church, as provided in the plan proposed by the General Conference of 1868. For a long time it was doubtful whether the necessary three-quarters' vote of the ministry could be obtained, but so serious was the feud and so sharp the division that many who had no sympathy with lay representation as such became convinced that the enterprises of the denomination had become so large and the possibilities of evil so great that the counsel and disinterested arbitrating influence of laymen in the General Conference were indispensable to the future welfare of the church, and the requisite number was secured.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### FRATERNAL RELATIONS AND THEIR CONCOMITANTS.

WHEN the General Conference of 1872 assembled in Brooklyn, N. Y., the bishops, through Simpson, reported that each conference had voted on the proposition to alter the Second Restrictive Rule so as to add, "not more than two lay delegates for each Annual Conference," and that the result was, for the proposed change, 4915, against it, 1597, blank, 4, showing that the necessary three fourths have been obtained, with, however, only 32 votes to spare.

Awaiting admission, one hundred and twenty-nine lay delegates, provisionally elected, appeared at the door of the General Conference. As soon as the body was organized the bishops made the foregoing report, and after discussions and various resolutions, by a vote of two hundred and eighty-three in the affirmative and six in the negative, the General Conference formally concurred with the Annual Conferences in changing the Second Restrictive Rule. By a subsequent vote the plan of lay delegation was adopted, thirty-six voting in the negative; and by a vote of two hundred and eighty-eight to one was ordered the calling of the roll of the laymen whose certificates of election were in the hands of the secretary, and their admission to seats in the General Conference allowed.

The negative vote was cast by the late Dr. William H.

Perrine, of Michigan, who held, vindicating his view with ability, that the clergy and the laity should sit in separate houses and that the plan as adopted contained grave defects which would work injury to the church.

Through their chairman, Dr. James Strong, the lay delegates after being seated presented an address to the conference. It recognized the gravity and responsibility of the hour and the train of divine providence that had led to it; deprecated any separation of so-called temporal and spiritual powers of the joint body as between its lay and its clerical members; and declared that the laity did not enter the body to propose any sudden or radical change in the practical machinery of the church.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, six years before this had admitted laymen both to the General and Annual Conferences, according in the former equal representation and in the latter in the ratio of four delegates to each presiding elder's district.

Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Nicholas Snethen, made in 1834: "If we are true to it [the pure, unmixed question of representation], if we are not ashamed of it, if we glory in it, it must finally prevail and proselyte every Methodist in the United States. They may, indeed, remain Episcopal Methodists, but so sure as we are not moved away from our high calling, the whole lump will be leavened into representative Methodists."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the usual standing committee, the conference ordered, on the ninth day of the session, a special committee on the affairs of the Book Concern, to be composed of one member from each delegation, to be elected by the delegations respectively; to this were referred all reports and papers relative to alleged irregularities and frauds in the Book Concern. On that committee were

<sup>1</sup> Editorial, "Methodist Protestant," new series.

appointed noted manufacturers, distinguished lawyers, merchants in large business, eminent financiers, such as John Evans of Colorado, John Owen of Michigan, Washington C. De Pauw of Indiana, Amos Shinkle of Kentucky, William Deering of Maine, Grant Goodrich of Chicago, Alexander Bradley of Pittsburg, and Judge Dennis Cooley of Iowa. They reported that:

“ Repeated frauds have been practiced upon the Book Concern. These frauds are found in the manufacturing department, and are located chiefly, if not wholly, in the bindery. Mr. Hoffman was superintendent of this department at the time of the perpetration of these frauds, and the evidence indicates that for a series of years he carried on a system of frauds by which the Concern sustained very considerable losses, the amount of which it is impossible to indicate with accuracy. . . . Also that the business entries of the years 1862 and 1864, including also the bindery and periodical account of 1861, are totally inexcusable as specimens of accounts.

“ Also that the losses sustained by frauds and irregularities are not of such magnitude as to endanger the financial strength of the Book Concern or materially impair its capital.

“ That there are no reasonable grounds or proofs to justify an assumption that any agent or assistant agent is or has been implicated or interested in any frauds which have been practiced on the Book Concern. . . .”

In reference to the purchasing of paper through the son of a former agent, the committee reported that, “ under all the circumstances of the case, we unhesitatingly regard it as a decided business impropriety.” Also that in certain transactions of the Book Concern with Messrs. Brown Brothers & Company, it was an unauthorized use of the credit of the Book Concern for the benefit of outside par-



ties. The committee say that they may reasonably believe that the motives which prompted to the act were to promote the interests of the Concern and to accommodate the missionary society of another denomination. "Yet," say the committee, "to guard against its influence as a precedent, we call your attention to it as an error fraught with peril to the interests of the Book Concern, which should not be sanctioned."<sup>1</sup>

The report of the special committee was adopted without debate and with little open opposition. While it was not wholly satisfactory to the assistant agent and decidedly unsatisfactory to those who had steadily denied the existence of frauds of any importance, its conclusions made a strong impression upon the General Conference and led to the adoption of a remarkable system for the management of the Book Concerns East and West.

It was decided that it was not proper to nominate for members of the Book Committee for the coming four years those who had served on that committee for the past four years, that it was not advisable that either of the recent book-agents should be placed upon the Book Committee, that the distinction between the agent and the assistant agent should be removed, and that two agents of equal authority should be elected quadrennially.

Provision was made that of six members of the Book Committee, three should reside in the vicinity of New York and three in the vicinity of Cincinnati, and that at least once a month the agents in each city should confer with the three nearest to them (known as the Local Committee); that the three at New York and the three at Cincinnati should have power to suspend an agent or editor for causes to them sufficient; and that a time should be fixed as early as

<sup>1</sup> For full report of committee and other reports and memorials, see appendix to "Journal of the General Conference of 1872."

practicable for the investigation, due notice having been given by the chairman of the Book Committee to the bishops, who should select one of their number to preside; and that two thirds of the General Conference representatives should be necessary to remove the said agent or editor.

The court of appeals was discontinued and a Judicial Conference provided for whereby any convicted were given an opportunity of securing the determination of an appeal without delay in the interval between one General Conference and another.

A new rule concerning amusements was enacted, adding to the question relating to imprudent conduct the words, "dancing, playing at games of chance, attending theaters, horse-races, circuses, dancing parties, or patronizing dancing schools, or taking such other amusements as are obviously of misleading or questionable moral tendency." A large minority voted against this statute on the ground that it was necessarily incomplete and tended to weaken the force of the general rule on the subject. The constitutionality of it has been questioned, but all attempts to expunge it have been defeated by a majority at least as large as it originally received.

A rule was passed requiring the classification of bishops as effective and non-effective, and Bishop Morris, far advanced in years and broken with infirmity, was returned as non-effective. The support of the bishops was referred to the people.

The need of reinforcing the episcopacy, caused by the rapid growth of the church and the extent of its territory at home and abroad, the deaths of the bishops elected in 1864, the non-effectiveness of Morris, and the feebleness and advancing years of Scott, made necessary the election of the unparalleled number of eight bishops.

Thomas Bowman, the first chosen, was born in Pennsylvania, July 15, 1817. He was graduated from Dickinson College, early became a famous preacher, was chaplain of the Senate of the United States, was the first principal of Dickinson Seminary at Williamsport, Pa., and had been president of the Indiana Asbury University for the fourteen years preceding his election.

William L. Harris was born November 4, 1817, in Ohio, entered the ministry in 1835, acted as pastor for eleven years, and was subsequently principal of Baldwin Institute in Ohio; for nine years was professor of chemistry and natural history in Ohio Wesleyan University, and for the preceding twelve years had been assistant corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society.

Randolph S. Foster was born in Ohio, February 2, 1820. He was an alumnus of Augusta College, Kentucky, began preaching when seventeen years old, was twenty-three years a member of the Ohio Conference, and had been twenty-two years in New York and vicinity when elected bishop, at which time he was president of Drew Theological Seminary.

Isaac W. Wiley was born in Pennsylvania, March 29, 1825. At the age of nineteen he was licensed to preach. He was graduated as a physician from the University of New York. From 1850 to 1854 he was a medical missionary at Foochow, China, after which he was pastor in Newark, Jersey City, and vicinity, and for five years principal of Pennington Seminary. For the eight years preceding his election to the episcopacy he was editor of the "Ladies' Repository."

Stephen M. Merrill was born September 16, 1825, in Ohio. Not graduated from any college, by protracted study he superinduced upon an excellent elementary training a solid structure of sound and diversified learning. His

ministerial life had been spent in the presiding eldership and the pastorate, the former being the position he occupied when elected a delegate to the General Conference of 1868, where his mental equipoise, mastery of constitutional principles, and clearness of expression profoundly impressed that body, and he was elected editor of the "Western Christian Advocate."

Gilbert Haven was born in Malden, Mass., September 19, 1821. He was an alumnus of Wilbraham Academy and of Wesleyan University of the class of 1846. After some years of teaching he entered the ministry. Early in the Civil War he served as chaplain; later he traveled in Europe and the East, resuming the ministry on his return. For the five years before his election he had been editor of "Zion's Herald."

Edward G. Andrews was born in western New York, August 7, 1825. An alumnus of Wesleyan University of the class of 1847, he entered the ministry at the age of twenty-three. After filling pastorates for eight years he became professor in the Oneida Conference Seminary at Cazenovia, N. Y., of which he was subsequently president for eight years. He filled important positions in the New York East Conference, and when elected bishop was the pastor of the Seventh Avenue Church in the city of Brooklyn.

Jesse T. Peck, also a native of western New York, was sixty-one years of age when elected to the episcopacy. He was licensed to preach at sixteen, but did not enter a conference until five years later. Besides filling pastorates and the presiding eldership as far south as Baltimore and as far west as California, he had been principal of two seminaries, president of Dickinson College, and secretary and editor of the tract department of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The General Conference, having ordered the establishment of a German family magazine named "Haus und Herd," elected Henry Liebhart editor. John P. Durbin was made honorary secretary of the Missionary Society, and, Harris having been elected bishop, Robert L. Dashiell, Thomas M. Eddy, and John M. Reid were elected corresponding secretaries. Richard S. Rust and Erastus O. Haven were elected respectively corresponding secretaries of the Freedmen's Aid Society and of the Board of Education. Erastus Wentworth, a genius with literary tastes and acquisitions, and who had been professor in Dickinson College and missionary in China, succeeded Wiley as editor of the "Ladies' Repository," Francis S. Hoyt, Merrill as editor of the Western, Benjamin St. James Fry, Crary as editor of the Central, William Hunter, Nesbit as editor of the Pittsburg "Christian Advocate," and Nelson E. Cobleigh was elected editor of the new "Methodist Advocate" at Atlanta, Ga. Arthur Edwards succeeded Reid in the Northwestern; he had been assistant editor of that paper for eight years.

Reuben Nelson, of the Wyoming Conference, who founded the Wyoming Conference Seminary in 1844 and filled the position of principal for twenty-seven years, succeeded Carlton, and John M. Phillips, a lay delegate from the Cincinnati Conference, long connected with the Book Concern in Cincinnati, succeeded Lanahan as agent of the Book Concern at New York.

The progress of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South led to the establishment of Clark University at Atlanta, Ga., New Orleans University at New Orleans, La., and Wiley University at Marshall, Tex., for the education of the freedmen, though students were admitted without distinction of race, sex, or previous condition. Isaac Rich bequeathed the bulk of his estate, valued at more than

a million and a half dollars, to Boston University, and soon after the adjournment of the conference the College of Music and the School of Law were organized; in 1873 the College of Liberal Arts and the School of Medicine, and one year later the School of Science.

Bishop Morris died at Springfield, O., September 2, 1874, having been licensed to preach sixty years before. Brevity, point, and pith characterized his preaching, sagacity his counsel and administration, and cordiality his spirit. Roberts, missionary bishop for Africa, died at Monrovia, Liberia, January 30, 1875. Thomas M. Eddy, whose election to the missionary secretaryship was received with so much favor, survived only until October 7, 1874, and died, universally admired and beloved, leaving a merited reputation for eloquence. As missionary secretary he was equally efficient as an administrator and a systematic worker in the office and a brilliant and persuasive orator. Two of the official editors died, Cobleigh of the Atlanta "Methodist Advocate," who had been college professor and president, editor of "Zion's Herald," and again college president, on February 1, 1874; and in June, 1875, Dallas D. Lore, of the "Northern Christian Advocate," eminent as missionary to South America, where he was seven years pastor in Buenos Ayres, and as pastor and preacher in this country. Peter Cartwright concluded a ministry of more than seventy years, during which he was pioneer preacher, a presiding elder for fifty-four years, and a member of thirteen General Conferences. Ludwig S. Jacoby, founder of the Methodist Episcopal mission in Germany, also died before the General Conference, which convened in Baltimore in 1876. Important questions came before this body; among them a proposition to add certain articles of faith which had been recommended to the General Conference of 1872, and referred to the bishops, who, after consideration, did not recommend the action,

on the ground that their adoption by the General Conference would be in violation of the First Restrictive Rule.

A woman had been presented for license as a local preacher, but the presiding elder had decided it to be unauthorized by the Discipline and usages of the church. An appeal was taken to Bowman, presiding at the North Indiana Conference, who sustained and affirmed the decision. An appeal was taken to the General Conference, which body declared the "said decision to be correct and agreeable to the letter and spirit of the Discipline." At the same conference was adopted the report of the committee on the state of the church adverse to the licensing and ordaining of women as ministers of the gospel.

The following resolutions relating to mixed and separate conferences were passed:

"*Resolved*, 1. That where it is the general desire of the members of an Annual Conference that there should be no division of such conference into two or more conferences in the same territory; and where it is not clearly to be seen that such division would favor or improve the state of the work in any conference; and where the interests and usefulness of even a minority of the members of such conference, and of the members of churches in such conference, might be damaged or imperiled by division; it is the opinion of this General Conference that such division should not be made.

"*Resolved*, 2. That whenever it shall be requested by a majority of the white members, and also a majority of the colored members, of any Annual Conference that it be divided, then it is the opinion of this General Conference that such division should be made; and in that case the bishop presiding is hereby authorized to organize the new conference or conferences."

These resolutions occasioned much discussion and ad-

verse criticism, which has continued to this day. Those who advocated the continuation of mixed conferences held that any movement toward separation would encourage the spirit of caste; that this, before the war, was the result of slavery, and, the civil freedom of the colored people being assured, should these resolutions pass, they would now have fewer privileges in the church than they had in the country. It was also argued that it was the duty of the church to continue mixed conferences in order to afford a better opportunity to the white preachers to assist in educating the colored and elevating them and the colored members in social and religious character. On the other hand, it was maintained that the question was one of expediency, and that the recognition of caste in any offensive sense was not implied; that no removal of privileges was proposed; that the object was simply to give the advantage of preference, and this as much to the colored people as to the whites. It was argued that there was not a single church of white members with a colored preacher, nor a single district of white churches with a colored presiding elder; that most of the districts were by preference either all colored or all white.

Many still hold that this action was inconsistent and retrogressive, and that, regardless of consequences to the "white work of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South," its whole work there should have ignored the question of race among those who speak the same language.

At this conference an effort was made to modify the presiding eldership so as to give Annual Conferences power to elect the elders over the districts, and to constitute them an advisory council with coördinate power. Twenty-seven Annual Conferences had reported action in



favor of, and eighteen against, some modification in the office. Twelve lay electoral conferences had reported action in favor of modification, and eight against it. The subject was referred to the committee on itinerancy, and two reports were presented. The majority reported in favor of submitting the question of amending the restrictive rule so as to allow the conferences to determine the number of districts within the limits of two and eight, and to make certain minor changes; but reported against a change of the Discipline so as to allow the election of presiding elders. The minority report, signed by twenty-six, proposed to give the conferences power to determine the number of districts between the limits of two and ten, to require the bishops in forming the districts to do so "with the advice of the presiding elders," and to restrict the bishops in appointing presiding elders to selections from those who should be nominated by a majority of the Annual Conferences by ballot without debate. There was a proviso that, in case the presiding bishop should deem that the interests of the church demanded that any person so nominated be otherwise employed, he should announce his decision to the conference, which should then proceed to make other nominations until the required number was attained.

After a thorough discussion, reviewing former controversies upon the subject and giving equal attention to the constitutional bearings of the question and to its expediency, a decisive motion to substitute the minority report for that of the majority was rejected by a vote of one hundred and twenty-three in the affirmative and one hundred and ninety-five in the negative. The majority report was then amended and adopted.

The conference decided to revise the hymn-book, and the bishops were ordered to appoint a committee of

fifteen, five to be selected from the Eastern States, five from the Central, and five from the Western. The General Conference decided that no hymn now in use should be excluded without a vote of two thirds of the committee for its rejection, and that no hymn not now in the collection should be admitted without a vote of two thirds of the committee in its favor, and that after the committee should have concluded their work it should be submitted to the bishops.

When the General Conference of 1848 declined to enter into fraternal relations with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Lovick Pierce informed the body that that communication was final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, "which could never renew the offer of fraternal relations, but that the proposition could be renewed at any time by the Methodist Episcopal Church."<sup>1</sup>

From then until May, 1869, no communication took place between the two churches; but at this time the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church invited the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to confer on the propriety, practicability, and methods of reunion. The latter directed the attention of the former to "the establishment of fraternal relations" as a necessary preliminary. The correspondence being reported to the General Conference of 1872, it passed the following:

"To place ourselves in the truly fraternal relations toward our Southern brethren which the sentiments of our people demand, and to prepare the way for the opening of formal fraternity with them; it is hereby

*Resolved*, That this General Conference will appoint a delegation, consisting of two ministers and one layman, to convey our fraternal greetings to the General Conference

<sup>1</sup> See page 483.

of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its next ensuing session."

This delegation consisted of Albert S. Hunt, Charles H. Fowler, and General Clinton B. Fisk, who appeared before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1874, and were warmly received. That body requested the bishops to appoint a delegation of two ministers and one layman to bear their fraternal salutations to the next session of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They resolved that, in order to remove all obstacles to formal fraternity, "our college of bishops is authorized to appoint a commission, consisting of three ministers and two laymen, to meet a similar commission authorized by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to adjust all existing difficulties."

The delegates were Lovick Pierce, James A. Duncan, and L. C. Garland. When the time arrived, Pierce, in the ninety-second year of his age and the seventy-second of his active ministry, began his journey, but, on account of ill-health, was unable to reach the seat of the conference. He addressed to the body a letter of equal pathos, frankness, and pertinency.

After the reading of his letter the Rev. James A. Duncan, D.D., president of Randolph Macon College, Virginia, was introduced, and never in the history of American Methodism was an impression more delightful and profound made by a single paragraph than by his exordium, which was delivered in a manner worthy of the traditions of Cicero:

"MR. PRESIDENT AND BRETHREN: As I stand in your presence to-day, a solemn joy in my heart takes precedence of all other emotions. The responsibility of my mission and of this hour is solemn, but its hope is an

inspiration of joy. Around me I behold the venerable and distinguished representatives of a great church; beyond them are millions of Methodists in America and Europe who feel deeply concerned in the issues of this hour; beyond them, in still more distant circles, stand a great cloud of witnesses, composed of all who care for the peace, the unity, and the prosperity of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus; and, above us is the 'general assembly and church of the first-born, who are written in heaven,' and among them, high seated in their own radiant places, are our sainted fathers; and above all, upon that eternal throne before which we all reverently worship, reigns 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.' In such solemn presence, where all dissensions seem profanities, where all temporal and sectional distinctions disappear, and there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ Jesus, through whom all have access by one Spirit unto the Father, and 'are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,' as a humble citizen of that kingdom and member of that household, in the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and by her authority as a fraternal messenger, with brotherly kindness in my heart and words of peace upon my lips, I salute you this day as brethren of Christ Jesus, our Lord."

The address of Dr. Garland was in not unpleasing contrast to that of his eloquent colleague, being a fine specimen of straightforward statement, containing sentences worthy of any setting, of which, taking the historical facts into the account, the following seems the most comprehensive: "Politics appear to me a centrifugal force,

tending continually to engender sectional strife and to the rending asunder of the bonds of civil society; and where shall we find a force to antagonize it, a centripetal force to draw together and cement in one the disunited parts, if not in the grand unity of a common Christian faith? We do therefore sincerely desire the restoration of good feeling between the two churches upon a basis derogatory to the honor of neither."

During the session of this conference George Peck died. He had been a minister seventy years, a member of thirteen General Conferences, had been editor of the "Methodist Quarterly Review" and of the "Christian Advocate and Journal."

Charles H. Fowler succeeded Daniel Curry as editor of the "Christian Advocate." Orris H. Warren, who had been assistant editor and in charge from the death of Lore, was elected editor of the Northern, and Erasmus Q. Fuller took the place of Cobleigh as editor of the "Methodist Advocate." Daniel Curry succeeded Wentworth as editor of the "Ladies' Repository," Alfred Wheeler, Hunter as editor of the Pittsburg, and John H. Acton, Dillon in the "Pacific Christian Advocate."

The commissioners appointed by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were Edward H. Myers, Robert K. Hargrove, Thomas M. Finney, David Clopton, and Robert B. Vance. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church appointed to meet them Morris D'C. Crawford, Enoch L. Fancher, Erasmus Q. Fuller, Clinton B. Fisk, and John P. Newman. The commissioners convened at Cape May, N. J., August 16, 1876, and continued in session seven days. As they included not only those known as conservative men, but some who had been regarded as extremists, it is remarkable that they could agree upon the following declaration and basis of fraternity:

“As to the status of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and their coördinate relation as legitimate branches of Episcopal Methodism, each of said churches is a legitimate branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States, having a common origin in the Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1784; and since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was consummated in 1845 by the voluntary exercise of the right of the Southern Annual Conferences, ministers, and members to adhere to that communion, it has been an evangelical church reared on Scriptural foundations, and her ministers and members, with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have constituted one Methodist family, though in distinct ecclesiastical connections.”

They laid down rules for determining disputed questions. Their conclusions were embodied in an address to the bishops, ministers, and members of the two churches.

R. Nelson, the senior book-agent at New York, died February 20, 1879, and Sanford Hunt was elected to fill the vacancy.

Bishop Ames died in Baltimore in April, 1879. Until his health failed some years before his death, his influence was cumulative. Shrewdness and breadth characterized him; his wit was somewhat caustic, but never malicious. Ordinarily, as a preacher, he employed the conversational style and was interesting and instructive, but, when fully roused, few, even among the greatest orators, were more effective.

Bishop Gilbert Haven was the next incumbent of the episcopal office to finish his course. No personality more strongly marked has been intrusted with the conservative functions of the episcopacy. By some it was doubted whether one constitutionally so radical, versatile, and out-

spoken could restrain himself within the conventional boundaries of the sphere to which he was introduced; but his administration gratified his admirers and reconciled those disposed to criticise the election. In the discharge of his duty he visited Africa, and was supposed to have contracted there the germs of the disease which, after he had long suffered, terminated his life. The circumstances attending his death revealed him in a new light to the church, though not to his intimate friends, who believed that he would die as he had lived, a true, spontaneous, Christian genius.

Another early death was that of R. L. Dashiell, corresponding missionary secretary. He had been successful as a minister, especially in the conversion of men of intellectual superiority and public position, popular as president of Dickinson College, and preëminently adapted to kindle and maintain an interest in the cause of missions.

A few weeks after the General Conference, Bishop Janes was seized with his last illness. His abilities and character through his zeal and industry were incorporated with the spirit, the institutions, and the history of the church of which he was a bishop for thirty-two years.

When the General Conference of 1880 came together in Cincinnati, a pleasant sensation was produced as the highly educated native Hindu, Baboo Ram Chandra Bose, attired in the picturesque costume of his people, took his seat as a lay delegate. The grammatical precision and pronunciation of his English surprised and delighted his fellow-delegates.

The arrangements begun in 1876 for the holding of an Ecumenical Conference were perfected. The committee of conference with other Methodist bodies reported that all had pledged their churches to a hearty coöperation, and presented a plan, which was adopted.

The ecclesiastical code was revised, important questions were adjudicated, and the action of previous conferences on the licensing and ordaining of women was reviewed under appeals, and confirmed.

Henry W. Warren, Cyrus D. Foss, John F. Hurst, and Erastus O. Haven were elected bishops.

Warren is a native of Massachusetts; his natal day is January 4, 1831. An alumnus of Wilbraham Academy and of Wesleyan University, he entered the ministry in 1848, taught natural science in Amenia, N. Y., and ancient languages at Wilbraham, joined the New England Conference in 1855, preaching sixteen years in its most important pulpits; he was pastor of Arch Street Church, Philadelphia, two terms of three years each, St. John's Church of Brooklyn three years, and he had been pastor of Spring Garden Street Church, Philadelphia, Pa., three months when elected bishop.

Foss, born in New York, January 17, 1834, is an alumnus of Wesleyan University, and he entered the ministry in 1857, after having been professor and later principal in Amenia Seminary. His ministry was entirely spent in the New York and New York East conferences, during which he was two terms, of three years each, pastor of St. Paul's, New York City. From 1875 until his election as bishop he was president of Wesleyan University.

Hurst was born in Maryland, August 17, 1834, and was graduated from Dickinson College in 1854. He studied abroad, and entered the New York Conference as a minister in 1858; after eight years of service he was transferred to the Germany and Switzerland Conference, where he was professor in the mission institutes at Bremen and Frankfort for five years. In 1871 he became professor of church history in Drew Theological Seminary. He was already known as an author, particularly by his "History of Rationalism: Embracing a Survey of the Present



State of Protestant Theology," by translations of Van Oosterzee's lectures on St. John's Gospel, Hagenbach's "History of the Church in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," and of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans in Lange's Commentary. He became president of Drew Seminary in 1873, and filled that position until his election as bishop.

Haven was born in Boston, Mass., November 1, 1820. He was an alumnus of Wesleyan University, and was for some years president of Amenia Seminary. He entered the ministry, filling important positions in New York State. In 1853 he became professor of Latin in the University of Michigan; in 1856 he was chosen editor of "Zion's Herald," and filled that position for seven years, during which he was made an overseer of Harvard University, elected a member of the State Senate and a member of the State Board of Education. From 1863 to 1869 he was president of the University of Michigan, and from 1869 to 1872 of the Northwestern University. The Conference of 1872 elected him secretary of the Board of Education, and in 1874 he was called to the chancellorship of the new University of Syracuse, where he remained until made bishop.

Hunt was elected book-agent at New York. Hitchcock, after long and faithful service, retired to the reward of universal love and reverence, and William P. Stowe was chosen to fill his place as agent at Cincinnati. Fowler was elected a corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, and James M. Buckley succeeded him as editor of the "Christian Advocate." Joseph C. Hartzell was elected editor of the "Southwestern Christian Advocate," established at New Orleans, and Daniel P. Kidder corresponding secretary of the Board of Education.

The Ecumenical Conference, a most important interdenominational event and the first reunion of the scattered

branches of Methodism, assembled in City Road, London, Wednesday, September 7, 1881. It was divided into two sections :

*Eastern.*

Wesleyan Methodist,  
 Irish Methodist,  
 Methodist New Connection,  
 Primitive Methodist,  
 Bible Christian,  
 United Methodist Free Churches,  
 Wesleyan Reform Union,  
 United Free Gospel Churches,  
 French Methodist,  
 Australian Methodist Church.

*Western.*

Methodist Episcopal Church,  
 Methodist Episcopal Church, South,  
 Methodist Protestant Church,  
 Evangelical Association,  
 United Brethren,  
 American Wesleyan Church,  
 Free Methodist Church,  
 Primitive Methodist Church in the United States,  
 Independent Methodist,  
 Congregational Methodist,  
 African Methodist Episcopal,  
 African Methodist Episcopal Zion,  
 Colored Methodist Episcopal Church of America,  
 Methodist Church of Canada,  
 Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada,  
 Primitive Methodist Church of Canada,  
 Canadian Bible Christians,  
 British Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada.

It was estimated that these bodies included nearly six million communicants, and that it would be safe to multiply the number of members by four to ascertain the number of adherents; by this means it was assumed that the conference represented a population of twenty-four millions. The multiplier is too high; three is the highest that can

safely be used. This, however, would represent nearly twenty millions of people directly or indirectly connected with the movement begun by John Wesley in 1739.

The conference was without legislative authority, and discussed Methodism, its history and results, its evangelical agencies, its perils, and its relation to the young. Under each of these heads specific topics were treated. On the broader field of universal Christianity it considered education, the use of the press, home and foreign missions, and Christian unity. Its effects upon the unity of Methodism in the United States were excellent. The best statement of this fact was made by the revered William Arthur: "People think that nothing particularly practical is being done in this Ecumenical Conference. They are only in the engine-house, where there is not a spool being spun, not a web being woven, and not a tissue being dyed. There is nothing being done but generating power, and therefore there is nothing practical being done. Sir, below the sky the two most practical things are human thought and human feeling, and what you have been doing here is making large thoughts and holy feelings; and what is practically being done is that here the large man is becoming larger and the small man is becoming less small; that here the broad man is becoming broader and the narrow man less narrow."

## CHAPTER XXII.

### STABILITY AMID CHANGE AND CONTROVERSY.

THE death of Scott, the first bishop who was the son of a Methodist preacher, took place on the 13th of July, 1882. He was a minister eighteen years before the great division, and to the last prayed for and promoted fraternity and unity.

The "Methodist," founded twenty-two years before, had been helpful in various reforms and to the church at large, had stimulated the journals owned by the denomination, and also tended to check the manifestation of a tyrannical spirit in their management. But the reforms which it advocated having been effected, and the "Christian Advocate" being conducted as a free forum for the discussion of all questions affecting Methodism, the circulation of the "Methodist" greatly declined, and its owners offered to sell its title, good will, and assets to the Book Concern. Accordingly it was purchased by the agents at New York, and ceased to exist in October, 1882.

Bishop Peck, whose services give him a sure place in the history of Methodism, died in Syracuse in May, 1883. Endowed with the oratoric temperament, in early and middle life he was famous as a preacher and platform speaker and was also known as an author.

The Rev. E. H. Gammon, a native of Maine, a superannuated minister, who retired early because of a malady

of the throat which did not interfere with his intellectual and physical energy, and who accumulated a large fortune, began in 1883 to give liberally to the establishment of a theological institute, organized under the charter of the Clark University at Atlanta, though independent in government. It was designed to prepare young men of African descent for the Methodist ministry. Subsequently he made the institution residuary legatee, and, established upon a firm basis, it has already become a factor of unequaled importance in the intellectual and moral development of the race for whose benefit it is designed, and through it he has contributed much to the progress of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The General Conference of 1884 assembled in Philadelphia, and comprised a membership of four hundred and seventeen, of whom one hundred and fifty-six were laymen. David S. Monroe was elected secretary. A shadow rested upon the hearts of the members because of the feeble condition of the senior bishop, Simpson. The conference gave attention to routine business, made no remarkable changes, strongly reaffirmed the action of former conferences upon the licensing and ordaining of women to preach, made various modifications in the Discipline, and introduced a new section on divorce, which last action was taken with a haste altogether out of proportion to the importance of the subject.

William X. Ninde, John M. Walden, Willard F. Mallalieu, and Charles H. Fowler were elected and consecrated bishops. Ninde, the son of a Methodist minister, was born in New York, June 21, 1832; he is an alumnus of Wesleyan University, and had been in the pastorate from the time of his entrance upon the ministry until 1873, when he became a professor of practical theology in Garrett Biblical Institute, of which he was president when elected bishop.

Walden was born in Ohio, February 11, 1831, and is an alumnus of Farmers' College. For some years he was engaged in journalism in Kansas; he became a member of the legislature, and was elected State superintendent of public instruction. He entered the Cincinnati Conference in 1858, and after filling positions as pastor, city missionary, presiding elder, and secretary of the Freedmen's Aid Society, became, in 1868, book-agent at Cincinnati, which office he occupied at the time of his election to the episcopacy.

Mallalien was born in Massachusetts, December 11, 1828, of blended Puritan and Huguenot ancestry. An alumnus of Wesleyan University, he entered the ministry in 1858, and was distinguished for eloquence and efficiency in the pastorate, to which he gave his entire time until within two years of his election as bishop, when he was appointed presiding elder of the Boston district.

Fowler was born in Canada, August 11, 1837. He was graduated from Genesee College in 1859, began the study of law, but turned to the ministry and was graduated from the Garrett Biblical Institute; spent four pastoral terms in Chicago; in 1872 became president of the Northwestern University; in 1876 was elected editor of the "Christian Advocate," and in 1880 one of the corresponding secretaries of the Missionary Society, in all of which positions he displayed uncommon abilities. He is the first grandson of a Methodist minister to be chosen bishop, his mother's father being Henry Ryan, a pioneer preacher, and a conspicuous figure in the history of Canadian Methodism.

It was decided to elect a missionary bishop for Africa. Various persons were nominated, most of whom withdrew, and on the final vote William Taylor received two hundred and fifty of the three hundred and fifty-three ballots cast.

He was born May 2, 1821, in Rockbridge, Va.; entered the Baltimore Conference in 1843, having traveled a circuit one year. At the age of twenty-eight he went as a missionary to California, and after seven years of hardship and successes engaged in evangelistic work principally in the Eastern States and Canada. He left America for Australia in 1862, spending several months in England and Ireland, and visiting Palestine *en route*. For two years and eight months he worked in Australia, Tasmania, and Ceylon, accomplishing results which in permanence have never been equaled on so large a scale. Similar success attended him on a second visit. Thence he went to Africa, singing and preaching in Cape Colony, Kaffraria, and Natal, making many converts among the colonists and natives. He visited England, laboring for eleven months in sixteen different London chapels. He went to Ceylon and India in 1870, working undenominationally.

In 1871 he began a separate work, based upon a self-supporting principle, namely, that missionaries should be supported wholly by the contributions received from their converts and the communities in which they labored. If these were not adequate they were to maintain themselves, as did Paul, by the labor of their hands; hence this was spoken of as the Pauline method. In this work his success was so great as to require the formation of the South India Conference.

After some years he came to the United States and secured means to send additional missionaries to India. He visited South America, principally Chile and Peru, in 1878, and there began a self-supporting work. That he might pursue his evangelistic plans untrammelled by the superintendence of others or by local responsibilities, he had located, and thus, though an ordained minister, in

respect to membership in the General Conference he was a layman, and appeared in Philadelphia as a lay representative from the South India Conference. To this man, who considers the world his parish in a broader sense geographically than even Wesley illustrated, was committed the function of ambassador plenipotentiary of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the Dark Continent.

Earl Cranston succeeded Walden as book-agent, and Daniel Curry, Daniel Denison Whedon as editor of the "Quarterly Review."

At this time Whedon was seventy-six years of age; though his mental force was unabated, his physical condition was such as to make it inadvisable to reëlect him for another term. He survived little more than a year, dying June 8, 1885. In addition to long service as an educator, he was for seven consecutive General Conferences chosen editor of the "Methodist Quarterly Review," projected and edited a commentary which has become a standard in the denomination, and produced a treatise on "The Freedom of the Will," intended to be an answer to the essay of Jonathan Edwards on the same subject.

Jeremiah H. Bayliss, until that time pastor, succeeded Hoyt as editor of the Western, Charles W. Smith was substituted for Wheeler in the Pittsburg, and Marshall W. Taylor for Hartzell in the "Southwestern Christian Advocate." Charles C. McCabe was elected one of the corresponding secretaries of the Missionary Society.

The conference adjourned on the 28th of May. Bishop Simpson died at his residence in Philadelphia on the 18th of June following. As preacher, professor, college president, and editor, he attained eminence. In eloquence and personal influence he has had no peer among the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the memory of men now living.



Bishop Wiley, who had been a missionary in China, died while holding the Foo-chow Conference, November 22, 1884. Like Simpson and Thomson, he was a graduate and a practitioner in medicine. His most marked characteristics were lucidity, self-restraint, prudence; in knowing when to speak and when to be silent in order to influence his brethren in the general committees of the church, he had nothing left to learn. He died and was entombed where he had begun his work as a medical missionary thirty-three years before.

The first hundred years of organized American Methodism terminated in December, 1884. In view of this fact, in 1878 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Atlanta, Ga., proposed its general celebration by the Methodists of the United States, the Dominion of Canada, and other parts of the continent of America, and instructed its bishops to open a correspondence on this subject with the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the presidents of the several Canada conferences, and all other Methodist bodies in America.

At the Ecumenical Conference in London, John M. Walden, a delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, drew up and circulated the following paper among the American delegates, to which eighty-one names were subscribed, representing seven of the denominations:

“The undersigned delegates from Methodist churches in America to the Ecumenical Methodist Conference join in commending to the favorable consideration of our respective churches the holding of a commemorative centennial meeting in 1884, to be composed of representatives (clerical and lay) from all Methodist bodies in America.”

Subsequent action was taken by the different churches, and a joint committee determined that the conference should consist of clerical and lay delegates in the proportion

of two to fifteen thousand members and probationers, on the basis of the latest official reports, no denomination to have less than two, of whom one should be clerical and one lay, it being provided that for fractions of more than one half of fifteen thousand an additional delegate might be appointed, each church to adopt such mode of appointment as it might deem best.

The Centennial Conference assembled according to the plan and remained in session seven days. Seven bishops, one hundred and thirty-two ministers, and sixty laymen of the Methodist Episcopal Church; three bishops, sixty-three ministers, and twenty-three laymen of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; five bishops, thirty-two ministers, and thirteen laymen of the African Methodist Episcopal Church; two bishops, seven ministers, and five laymen of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; three bishops and seven ministers of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church of America; one minister and one layman of the Primitive Methodist Church; two ministers of the Methodist Church of Canada; and one minister and one layman of an Independent Methodist Church, were present as delegates. Two ministers and two laymen represented the Methodist Protestant Church, and one minister the Bible Christian Church, as fraternal delegates. The subjects treated were: The Work and Personnel of the Conference which organized the Methodist Episcopal Church known as "the Christmas Conference." The Superintendency of Asbury, The Relations of John Wesley to American Methodism, The Statistical Results, A Comparison of Methodism in 1784 and in 1884, The Causes of the Success of Methodism, and the Possible Dangers to Methodism in the Future, The Rise and Progress of Methodism in Canada, The Work and Character of Methodist Pioneers, The Power of Methodism over the Masses, Its

Means of Grace, The Aim and Character of Methodist Preaching and its Doctrinal Unity, Guards to the Purity of its Doctrinal Teaching, The Essential Points of Christian Experience, The Value of the Press, General and Periodical, to Methodism, The Place and Power of the Lay Element, What Methodism Owes to Woman, and Its Influence on Other Denominations. The evenings were devoted to addresses upon Missions, Education, Sunday-schools, and The Mission of Methodism to the Extremes of Society. The proceedings were published in a volume edited by H. K. Carroll (author of "The Religious Forces of the United States"), the Rev. W. P. Harrison, and the Rev. J. H. Bayliss, and comprise a series of essays and addresses of permanent value.

Daniel Curry, editor of the "Christian Advocate" for twelve years and also of the "National Repository," and during the last three years of his life editor of the "Quarterly Review," died on the 17th of August, 1887. He was born on the 26th of November, 1809, which year was noted in different parts of the world and in dissimilar spheres for the birth of extraordinary men, among them William E. Gladstone, Abraham Lincoln, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Not one of them all possessed more rugged strength of intellect or tenacity of will than this man of Scotch-Irish descent. He graduated rather late in life from Wesleyan University, soon became professor in the female college at Macon, Ga., and there, two years later, entered the ministry. Being a radical abolitionist, he returned to the North when the church divided. He was at one time president of the Indiana Asbury University and was a member of eight General Conferences.

William L. Harris, secretary of the board of bishops and resident bishop of New York, died in that city September 2, 1887. Had he survived until the 4th of the following

November he would have completed threescore years and ten. He was five times secretary of the General Conference, and possessed many of the characteristics of a statesman, being a master of parliamentary and ecclesiastical law; with Judge McHenry he prepared an elaborate work upon the rules of evidence and kindred subjects, and was the author of various pamphlets and volumes upon the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He left the stamp of his personality ineffaceably upon the jurisprudence and the administrative and legislative departments of the church.

Among the most remarkable of the men whose memoirs were read to the General Conference of 1888 was Marshall W. Taylor, who was of Scotch-Irish-Indian descent on the paternal side, and of African and Arabian on the maternal. His grandmother was brought to this country when a child from Madagascar. His parents were slaves, but his mother was given her freedom by the will of her master at his death, and his father had purchased his before this son was born. He possessed fine powers as a pulpit orator, was a ready debater and a wise presiding elder. He entered upon the editorship of the "Southwestern Christian Advocate" in a time of controversy, but died "before the great questions which involved the fitness of his race for positions of trust, honor, and responsibility in the church which he loved were settled beyond dispute."

The Methodist Episcopal Church was bereaved of two of its most devoted and useful laymen on Thursday, May 5, 1887—Oliver Hoyt and Washington C. De Pauw.

Mr. Hoyt was descended from New England yeomanry. He was converted at the age of sixteen, and accumulated a large fortune early in life by industry, judgment, and a character which inspired confidence; but from his first savings until the end he gave liberally. In the local church he was

active, and for thirty years was superintendent in the Sunday-school of the church in Stamford, Conn., of which in his boyhood he was a pupil. He considered himself a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, studied its situation, was intimately connected with Abel Stevens, its historian, and was one of the earliest advocates of the formal introduction of the laity into a constitutional share of the responsibilities of the church. He sat as a lay representative in three General Conferences, and was a devoted friend to the missionary cause, one of the vice-presidents of its board of managers, treasurer of the Board of Education, trustee and treasurer of Wesleyan University, and one of the managers of the Methodist Episcopal Hospital and of the American Bible Society. In dying he remembered the objects of his beneficence while living, bequeathing large sums to Wesleyan University, the Missionary Society, the Bible Society, to the New York and New York East conferences for the relief of worn-out ministers, to Cornell College, Iowa, and to the Methodist Episcopal Hospital of Brooklyn.

Mr. De Pauw was born in Salem, Ind. He was early thrown on his own resources, but was so industrious that he worked without pay rather than be idle. His business career was thoroughly successful. He was a class-leader, steward, and trustee. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of Christian holiness as taught by Wesley, a modest but confident professor of its experience, and for many years a member of an association for its promotion. As his fortune increased he regarded himself more and more as a steward of God, and handsomely endowed a female college which had previously been so embarrassed as to suspend, and he gave large sums to the Indiana Asbury University, which he also made residuary legatee. In his honor the trustees of both these institutions changed the names

thereof. Professor Curtiss<sup>1</sup> states that Mr. De Pauw opposed to the last changing the name of Indiana Asbury to De Pauw University.

The Conference of 1888 convened in the Metropolitan Opera-house in the city of New York. It was confronted by a delicate problem. Five women had been elected lay delegates by as many lay electoral conferences—Frances E. Willard from the Rock River, Angie F. Newman from the Nebraska, Mary C. Nind from the Minnesota, Amanda C. Rippey from the Kansas, and Lizzie D. Van Kirk from the Pittsburg. The last-named did not claim a seat.

A protest, signed by ministers and laymen, against their being seated had been placed in the hands of the bishops. The senior bishop, Bowman, who presided, presented to the conference a communication from the bishops stating the fact of the election of these women, the question concerning their legal status, and the absence of precedents. They held that neither the secretary nor the bishops could decide a constitutional question, and proposed that the conference be organized with those who were unquestionably duly qualified to sit as members of the body. In pursuance of this opinion, the chair directed the secretary of the last conference to call the roll. The conference being organized, those whose eligibility was disputed were found to consist of two classes: women and certain laymen elected by conferences within whose bounds they did not reside. These were John M. Phillips, of New York, elected by the Mexico Conference, and Robert E. Pattison, of Pennsylvania, elected by the North India Conference. The question of the eligibility of women was referred to a special committee on eligibility, and that of the non-resident delegates to another committee.

The report of the special committee declared women

<sup>1</sup> "Manual of Methodist Episcopal Church History."

ineligible under the constitution as it now is, and the seats claimed by women to be vacant, and instructed the secretary to notify the first reserves. In the ensuing debate it was argued against the admission of women that when lay delegates were admitted women had not been eligible to hold any office in the government of the church; not till eight years afterward was the legal right of women to hold any office indisputably established, and then only upon subjects unquestionably within the power of the General Conference; that, while the laity include the whole body of the church as distinguished from the clergy and all orders, without regard to sex or age, the word "laymen," with regard to seats in the legislative body of the church, had never included women; and that in no debate prior to the vote to change the constitution so as to admit lay delegates did any one intimate that women would be eligible. But both parties appealed to women on the ground that they were disinterested arbiters—as they would not be eligible in any case as members of the conference—to vote as to whether they desired lay representation.

In favor of their admission it was maintained that they are certainly members of the church, and do not belong to the clergy, but to the laity; that the General Conference of 1872 declared that in all matters pertaining to lay delegation the word "laymen" included all members of the church that are not members of Annual Conferences; that from the beginning women had sat in the electoral conferences; that it made no difference whether women were contemplated or not when the rule was passed; that they were duly elected, and to disallow them seats would be to disfranchise the constituency that sent them; and that when the law is doubtful and a question of rights is involved, the law should be construed broadly in favor of the rights claimed.

Those who upheld the unconstitutionality of the claim replied to these points that women are not laymen in the sense of the restrictive rule; that the vote declaring who are laymen related wholly to the eligibility of local preachers; that the fact that women had sat in lay electoral conferences and been elected reserve delegates settled nothing, as the reserve had no standing unless the principal defaulted, therefore the question had not been raised in the General Conference; that that body could not destroy the constitution by an interpretation; and that the terms of the law are not doubtful, taken in connection with the existing custom.

To this was replied that the presumption is that the General Conference meant exactly what it said, and that if it is unconstitutional for a woman to be elected, it is unconstitutional for her to sit in lay electoral conferences, and that, therefore, those conferences which admitted her were illegal and the results illegal. To this was answered that this was not so; that, unless they were there in sufficient numbers to make the result of actions turn upon their votes, it merely bore the same relation to legality that it would bear if laymen under twenty-five years of age were present.

During the debate the report was amended by a proposition to submit to the church the question of a change in the restrictive rule by the introduction of the words, "and the said delegates may be men or women."

On the final vote the orders divided, and the report as amended was adopted by a concurrence of both orders: one hundred and fifty-nine ministers voted for the report, and one hundred and twenty-two against; seventy-eight laymen for, and seventy-six against. Subsequent to this action the first reserves arrived and took the seats thus declared vacant.



The committee upon the non-resident claimants divided, a majority reporting in favor of their admission, and a minority against it; the report of the latter was adopted, and the seats claimed by the said delegates were declared vacant.

This conference extended the possible pastoral term to five years, with modifications which admitted of a pastor's spending five years in any ten in the same church. It also enacted that a presiding elder might be appointed to the same district six years in succession. The status of missionary bishops was determined.

Provision was made for the establishment of the office of deaconess in the church. It was provided that no vow of celibacy or of lifelong devotion should be required; that no one under twenty-five years of age should be admitted; that all should remain upon probation two years before receiving certificates; that when working singly they were to be under the direction of the pastor of a church, and when in a home they were to be subordinate to and under the direction of the superintendent in charge.

For the first time in the history of Methodism, it was ordered that it should require a majority of two thirds of all the votes cast to constitute an election to the episcopacy. Six bishops were elected, of whom five were general superintendents, and one missionary bishop of India and Malaysia.

John H. Vincent, born in Tuscaloosa, Ala., February 23, 1832, was educated in academies in Pennsylvania. He began to preach at eighteen, entered the New Jersey Conference in 1853, and after four years in that State moved to Illinois, filling pastorates in the Rock River Conference until 1865, when he became general agent of the Methodist Episcopal Sunday-school Union. In 1868 he was elected by the General Conference corresponding secretary both of the Sunday-school Union and the Tract Society, and editor of

the Sunday-school publications of the church. He became still more widely known by his connection with the Chautauqua summer school, founded by himself and Lewis Miller, a lay member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of Akron, O.

James N. Fitzgerald was born in Newark, N. J., July 27, 1837; was educated as a lawyer, and practiced that profession for a short time; but in his twenty-second year entered the ministry in the Newark Conference, where he served seventeen years as a pastor and three years as presiding elder, and in 1880 was chosen recording secretary of the Missionary Society, a position which he filled with such dignity and efficiency as to make him favorably known to the church.

Isaac W. Joyce was born in Ohio, October 11, 1836. He joined the Northwest Indiana Conference in 1859, and had been occupied in the pastorate. In Cincinnati he was pastor of St. Paul's Church two terms, and also of Trinity Church. His marked efficiency as a pastor and evangelist, his prudence and fervency, commended him to the large number who justly believed that the pastorate should always be represented upon the board of bishops.

John P. Newman was born in the city of New York, September 1, 1826. Early becoming conspicuous as a preacher, his extensive travels in Europe and the East spread his fame. When the federal government had obtained access to Mississippi and New Orleans, he was appointed by Bishop Ames to reorganize the Methodist Episcopal Church in that part of the country. He went to Washington in 1869 under appointment to establish the Metropolitan Church; while there he acted as chaplain of the Senate. Later he traveled abroad, and on his return was reappointed to the Metropolitan Church. He was stationed at that church for the third time in 1886, and was its pastor when elected bishop.

Daniel A. Goodsell is the son of the Rev. Buell Goodsell, and was born November 5, 1840, at Newburg, N. Y. Educated at the New York University, he entered the ministry at nineteen years of age, and for twenty-nine years filled positions of increasing importance in the New York East Conference. When elected he was secretary of the Board of Education, having been selected to fill the vacancy made by the resignation of Daniel P. Kidder.

James M. Thoburn, born at St. Clairsville, O., March 7, 1836, was graduated from Allegheny College in 1857, entered the Pittsburg Conference the next year, and went as a missionary to India April 18, 1859. In 1874 he was stationed in Calcutta, where he resided as pastor, presiding elder, and editor up to the time of his election. The church accepted him as its ideal of the Christian missionary, and believed him preëminently qualified for the wide responsibility of superintendency in a field both difficult and vast.

John M. Reid, senior corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, retired and was made honorary secretary. J. O. Peck, a pastor noted for energy and success, and Adna B. Leonard, with a similar reputation for efficiency in the pastorate and presiding eldership, were elected missionary secretaries. J. L. Hurlbut took the place of Vincent as corresponding secretary both of the Sunday-school Union and the Tract Society; Charles H. Payne, at that time president of Ohio Wesleyan University, was elected to succeed Goodsell as corresponding secretary of the Board of Education; James W. Mendenhall, widely known as a pastor and presiding elder, and an author of works of importance, especially of a voluminous treatise entitled "Plato and Paul," was elected editor of the "Methodist Review"; and Aristides E. P. Albert, of reputation for intelligence and culture among the delegates of African descent, was elected editor of the "Southwestern Christian Advocate."

John M. Phillips, agent of the Book Concern at New York, died on the 15th of January, 1889. For seventeen years he had occupied that position and also that of treasurer of the Missionary Society, and in both offices earned and received ever-increasing respect and confidence. On the 13th of the following month Homer Eaton, of the Troy Conference, and chairman of the General Book Committee, was elected to fill the vacancy.

J. H. Bayliss, who had been editor of the "Western Christian Advocate" since 1884, died August 14, 1889. He had filled pastorates in three important cities, Chicago, Indianapolis, and Detroit, and in each took rank with the most influential clergymen of the city. The next month David H. Moore, pastor, educator, and late chancellor of the University of Denver, was chosen by the Book Committee to succeed him.

The second Methodist Ecumenical Conference was held at Washington in October, 1891. Five hundred representatives were present, and the assembly sat with undiminished interest for fourteen days. William Arthur had been selected to deliver the opening sermon, but, though present, his voice being inadequate to the task, it was read by Dr. Stephenson, president of the Wesleyan Conference. Vast audiences attended the meetings from early morning till late at night.

The delegates were received at the White House by President and Mrs. Harrison, and on the 17th of October, the subject under consideration being "International Arbitration," the President visited the conference and delivered an address worthy of himself, his position, the theme, and the occasion.

The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in their address to the General Conference of 1892, say that "no one who attended the meetings can ever forget the deep

and genuine enthusiasm and the glowing religious fervor which continued without abatement throughout. The range of topics discussed embraced all the practical questions of the times, and many of the papers were able in a marked degree. It is gratifying to record that brothers without distinction of color mingled with easy cordiality and without any apparent discrimination, not only at the communion-table, but both in the presidency upon the platform and in the speeches upon the floor."

Among those whose death elicited expressions of sorrow from this conference, none was more sincerely mourned than General Clinton B. Fisk, for he was almost as well known to English as to American Methodism. His services to the Methodist Episcopal Church had been various and valuable. As a platform speaker it would be difficult to find his superior in church or state. Of the boards of colleges, seminaries, and of the Missionary Society he was an efficient member, and as one of the local Book Committee in New York he was remarkably useful; but the quality that endeared him to all was an indescribable geniality which diffused itself through every company, public or private. As a member of the Cape May Commission and as a delegate to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, he contributed much to the reëstablishment of fraternity, and as an advocate of temperance and the prohibition of the liquor traffic he exerted a potent influence.

Benjamin St. James Fry, editor of the "Central Christian Advocate" at St. Louis, died February 5, 1892. Early in life he was a journalist, but became a minister in 1847. He served several churches in Ohio, was for some years president of a female college, and three years chaplain in the Union army. He conducted the business of the depository of the Methodist Book Concern at St. Louis from 1865 until 1872; in the latter year was elected editor,

and filled that position with more than usual success until his death. He was a prolific author, principally of Sunday-school books and biographies.

The burning question of the quadrennium was the proposition to change the constitution so as to make women eligible to seats in the General Conference. The subject was discussed for many months. Their admission was opposed on two grounds: that the occupancy of such positions by women is not in harmony with the teachings of the New Testament, and that it would not be expedient.

Both propositions were denied by the friends of the movement. The question of rights also was debated, one side claiming that women are entitled to representation, and the other maintaining that they are represented in the divinely appointed way.

The laity were asked to express their wishes in the matter, and did so with the result that 235,668 voted that women should be made eligible as lay delegates in the electoral and General Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and 163,843 voted that it was not expedient to make them eligible. This vote was without legal force, and its moral significance was challenged on the ground that the whole number voting was less than one sixth of the membership. The challenge was met with the statement that this was a large vote when compared with other votes of the laity.

On the legal vote of the ministry to change the restrictive rule, the vote stood 5634 for and 4717 against. As the constitution requires a vote of three quarters to make such a change, the measure failed for the want of more than two thousand votes.

At the General Conference of 1892, which met in Omaha, no woman appeared claiming a seat, though some had been elected reserve delegates. The advocates of admission,

desiring to take some step to promote their object, took cognizance of the election of these reserve delegates, and moved a reference of the subject to the Judiciary Committee, with instructions to report upon the eligibility of women. It unanimately reported, one member declining to vote, that, under the situation as it now is, women are not eligible. When this report was presented it was moved to reverse the statement. Pending the discussion of the substitute, an amendment was offered that the question be submitted again to the laity for an expression of opinion, and to the ministry for a change in the restrictive rule. The conditions of this proposition were peculiar. Members of the Annual Conferences were requested to vote upon the question of amending the restrictive rule by adding the words, "and said delegates must be male members," and it was assumed that if the amendment so submitted did not receive the votes of three quarters of the ministers present and voting, and two thirds of that or a subsequent General Conference, the rule should be so construed that the words "lay delegates" might include both men and women. This proposal was introduced near the close of the final session, and was hastily passed amid confusion and many departures of members for their homes.

Another complex subject was the report of a commission on the revision of the constitution. After the passage of an important amendment, the report was indefinitely postponed, but referred to the consideration of the next General Conference.

Homer Eaton was elected book-agent at New York; Lewis Curts, a minister and presiding elder of the Rock River Conference, succeeded William P. Stowe as book-agent at Cincinnati; David H. Moore was elected editor of the "Western Christian Advocate"; Jesse Bowman Young, an alumnus of Dickinson College, an author and

Sunday-school worker, and at the time pastor of the Grand Avenue Church in Kansas City, was elected editor of the "Central Christian Advocate"; J. E. C. Sawyer, a member of the Troy Conference and a successful pastor, succeeded Warren as editor of the Northern, and E. W. S. Hammond, Albert as editor of the Southwestern. Albert J. Nast was elected editor of "Der Christliche Apologete" in place of his father, who had held that position since the inception of the paper. Joseph C. Hartzell and John W. Hamilton were elected corresponding secretaries of the Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society. Hartzell had long been associated with Richard S. Rust, but had been elected by the corporation. Rust now retired, "full of years and of honors." Hamilton's reputation as an orator and energetic worker, and his known sympathy with the objects of the society, led to his election.

The Epworth League, which had been formed since the last General Conference, was recognized as a special organization, and a constitution adopted which made it a part of the church. It provided that the president of an Epworth League chapter must be a member of the church, elected by the chapter, and approved by the Quarterly Conference, of which, when so approved, he is a member. Joseph F. Berry, a member of the Detroit Conference and at that time assistant editor of the "Michigan Christian Advocate," was elected editor of the "Epworth Herald."

Between the General Conference of 1892 and that of 1896 the church was bereaved by the death of J. W. Mendenhall, editor of the "Methodist Review," Jonas Oramel Peck, corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, Benjamin F. Crary, editor of the "California Christian Advocate," Henry Liebhart, editor of "Haus und Herd," and Sanford Hunt, senior publishing agent at New York.



Mendenhall had infused a new spirit into the "Review," and largely increased its circulation. Peck had achieved reputation as a powerful and persuasive advocate of missions and as a painstaking secretary and superintendent. Crary was far advanced in years and had for some time been disqualified for active work, but his previous services were gratefully remembered by his contemporaries. Liebhart, writing in German and for the Germans, had conducted with success the mission committed to him. Hunt was never clearer, firmer, or more influential than on the day when, without warning, he fell while in the discharge of his duty. A description of his achievements for the church and the country would worthily fill a volume.

The General Conference of 1896 was held in Cleveland, O. The peculiar amendment proposed by the Conference of 1892 had created such dissatisfaction that six thousand ministers either refused or neglected to vote upon it. As the constitution of the church allows an Annual Conference to propose a constitutional change, the Colorado Conference voted upon the amendment which had been defeated in the preceding quadrennium, and requested the bishops to submit it to the other conferences. It lacked thirty-eight votes of the number necessary.

In the meantime four women had been elected,—Jane Field Bashford of Ohio, Lois S. Parker and Ada C. Butcher of North India, and Lydia A. Trimble of Foo-chow,—and the first three appeared to claim their seats. The Conference of 1892 having empowered and instructed the secretary of the last General Conference to make up the roll from the credentials submitted to him, the difficulty which occurred in 1888 did not arise. The roll was called, and the three women responded to their names.

Immediately after the election of the secretary, the right of these women to seats was challenged. The challenge

was referred to a special committee which divided in judgment, nearly two thirds sustaining the claim of the women, the minority reporting it to be unconstitutional. It was moved to substitute the minority report for that of the majority, on which debate was about to begin, when the women who were present sent a communication to the conference, withdrawing on the ground that, while they believed they were legally entitled to seats, they did not wish to be the center of controversy.

As the fourth claimant was not present and took no part in this, it was held that the case was still before the body, and the debate proceeded, continuing some days, when the reports were recommitted and the powers of the committee enlarged in the hope of reaching an amicable method of disposing of the question for the present. After deliberation the majority of the committee consented to submit to the church a new proposition to change the restrictive rule so as to admit of the election of women. Those who maintained that the constitution as it now is excludes women consented to allow any of the claimants to sit in the conference, provided it was admitted that they sat under a title in dispute, and that the challenge could be pressed at any time.

Upon its almost unanimous adoption, Lydia A. Trimble, who had arrived during the discussion and taken her seat, declined to sit under a title in dispute, and withdrew. The conference then took a formal vote on the alteration of the restrictive rule; and of the five hundred and twenty-three votes cast, four hundred and twenty-five were for and ninety-eight against the alteration.

During the conference the death was announced of John M. Reid, honorary corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society. He had always commanded approbation by fidelity, and confidence by integrity in dispute.

Accompanied by unanimous manifestations of love the conference recorded its conviction that Bishops Bowman and Foster, who at this conference finished twenty-four years of most effective episcopal service, were unable longer to endure the protracted strain, continuous responsibility, and almost constant travel imposed by the office of bishop, and that at the close of the present General Conference they should be returned on the non-effective list. They were allowed to select their places of residence in accordance with their convenience and wishes, without regard to the places designated as episcopal residences, and the Book Committee was instructed to make the most generous provision for their support.

Similar action was taken in the case of William Taylor, missionary bishop of Africa. The conference requested the Missionary Society to provide liberally for his support, commended him to the loving favor of the whole church, and prayed that his long day of ceaseless toil might culminate in a twilight of sweet association with his brethren until his entrance upon the heavenly rest.

The conference resolved that "there should be no discrimination on account of race or color in electing bishops, but men should be chosen because of their worth and fitness for the position," and declared its belief that "the time has come when the General Conference may safely and wisely choose a bishop from among its seventeen hundred ministers of African descent." It resolved to elect two bishops, and reaffirmed the action of 1888 making necessary a vote of two thirds of all the votes cast to elect to the episcopacy.

J. W. E. Bowen, a minister of African descent, educated and eloquent, professor in the Gammon Theological Seminary, held the first place on the first ballot, having received one hundred and forty-five votes. He

rose on the second to one hundred and seventy-five, and was still at the head. On the fifteenth ballot, in which the whole number cast was five hundred and four, three hundred and thirty-six necessary to a choice, Charles C. McCabe was elected. He was born in Athens, O., October 11, 1836. On account of his heroism on the battle-field and in Libby prison, eloquence in behalf of the Christian Commission, skill in increasing the endowment of his alma mater, Ohio Wesleyan University, sixteen years' efficient work in the cause of church extension, and the resonance throughout the land of the silver trumpet through which he cried, "A million for missions," and was then crying, "A million and a half," he had become perhaps the most popular of American Methodists.

Earl Cranston received three hundred and sixty-six votes on the sixteenth ballot, the number necessary to a choice being three hundred and thirty-six. He also was a native of Athens, O., born June 27, 1840. A student in the Ohio University and at the head of the class of 1861, early in that year he entered the army, but returned at the end of a year and a half broken in health. Later he began business, but feeling a divine call to the ministry, entered the Ohio Conference, and after preaching some years in several States was transferred to Denver, Colo. He soon became presiding elder, making an extraordinary reputation for administrative ability and executive force. He had been remarkably efficient as publishing agent in Cincinnati since 1884.

Joseph C. Hartzell was elected missionary bishop of Africa. He is an alumnus of the Illinois Wesleyan University and of the Garrett Biblical Institute. He was transferred in 1870 from the Illinois Conference to the Ames Church in the city of New Orleans, and three years later

became presiding elder of a district of the same name, meanwhile editing the "Southwestern Christian Advocate." He was corresponding secretary of the Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society when made bishop.

Abraham J. Palmer, an alumnus of Wesleyan University, a pastor and presiding elder in the Newark, New York, and New York East conferences, widely known as a lecturer and at this time pastor of St. Paul's Church, New York, was elected missionary secretary. The conference having decided that three secretaries were required, William T. Smith, of the Des Moines Conference, was elected on a later ballot. His success in interesting the ministers and laity of the Des Moines Conference in missions and other enterprises of the church directed attention to him as fitted for this position. Though the secretaries are equal in rank, Leonard, who had been for eight years junior to McCabe, by courtesy now became senior.

George P. Mains was elected publishing agent at New York. He is a native of New York, an alumnus of Wesleyan University, and has been for twenty-six years a member of the New York East Conference, during which, besides being in charge of important churches, he has been presiding elder, superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Hospital and of the Brooklyn Church Society. At the time of his election he had just reëntered the pastorate.

H. C. Jennings was chosen to fill the vacancy in the Western Book Concern made by the election of Cranston to the episcopacy. He was presiding elder of the Marshall district of the Minnesota Conference, and had been a member of that body twenty-five years. W. S. Matthew was elected editor of the "California Christian Advocate," of which he had been in charge since the failure in health of Crary in February, 1894; from 1887 until that time he

had been dean of the College of Liberal Arts of the University of Southern California. Isaiah B. Scott, president of Wiley University, Texas, succeeded Hammond as editor of the "Southwestern Christian Advocate." M. C. B. Mason, who had been field agent of the Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society, and who had been elected assistant corresponding secretary two years before, was chosen one of the corresponding secretaries, the first instance of the election of a brother of African descent to a corresponding secretaryship.

The conference more explicitly than ever before defined the relations of the general superintendents and missionary bishops. Previous conferences having declared that a missionary bishop "is not subordinate to the general superintendents, but is coördinate with them in authority, in the field to which he is appointed," this conference added: "In the practical application of this coördinate authority, when the general superintendents are making their assignments to conferences, any missionary bishop who may be in the United States shall sit with them when his field is under consideration, and arrangements shall be made so that once in every quadrennium, and not oftener unless a serious emergency arises, every mission over which a missionary bishop has jurisdiction shall be administered jointly by the general superintendent and the missionary bishop. In case of difference of judgment the existing status shall continue unless overruled by the general superintendents, who shall have power to decide finally."

A movement of considerable force was made to remove the time limitation from the itinerancy so as to allow appointments from year to year. Also a proposition was reported to provide for exceptional cases while retaining the limit. The latter being unsatisfactory and the former not having sufficient support, the subject, which was not

taken up for discussion till late in the evening before the day of adjournment, was finally laid upon the table.

At the closing session Bishop Merrill, in behalf of the board of bishops, invoked the divine blessing upon all that the conference had done and "all the good things of our glorious Methodism that it had allowed to remain."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### OTHER BRANCHES OF THE COMMON ROOT.

WHILE the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are yet in the ascending scale of their development, contemporaneously with them other denominations of Methodists have been cultivating the fields which Providence and their peculiar autonomy and zeal have allotted to them.

Among these, one of the most prominent is the AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.<sup>1</sup> The Conference of 1818 met in a private residence in the city of Baltimore; already 1066 persons were recognized as members of the Society. The date of the first General Conference cannot be positively identified, but the second is known to have convened in 1820.

Morris Brown was appointed assistant bishop in 1826, and ordained in 1828 as the second bishop of the connection. He displayed great energy, organized the first conference in Ohio at Hillsboro in 1830, and appointed William Paul Quinn a general missionary in the region west of the Ohio. Bishop Allen died in 1831, having been infirm for some time. In 1840 Brown organized the Canada Conference.

<sup>1</sup> Often spoken of as "African Methodist Episcopal [Bethel] Church." See p. 346.



The laws of the State of Delaware in 1832 did not allow colored ministers to itinerate, and a petition was circulated in the Philadelphia Conference for the ordination of local elders to administer the sacraments.

Edward Watters, the third bishop, was born a slave, but bought his freedom of Duvall, his master. He never held an Annual Conference nor ordained a minister, but was annually appointed like other ministers.<sup>1</sup>

The membership numbered 7594 in 1836.

The first copy of a magazine issued by the church appeared in September, 1841, but after a struggling existence of eight years its publication ceased.

At the Baltimore Conference in 1843 a controversy arose on the subject of the qualifications for a minister. A committee, of whom Payne was chairman, reported against the ordination of a man on the ground that he did not possess the information required by the Discipline. This caused a brother to demand violently whether one must read Greek, Hebrew, and Latin before he could be ordained. The committee responded that they proposed that he simply be required to understand the Discipline and Bible. The minority prevailed, but Bishop Brown declared that he would not ordain such if the whole conference voted that it should be done.

The addition of William Paul Quinn to the episcopate in 1844 opened a new era. He saw the number of ministers in the church increase from seven to two thousand, and the members from fifteen hundred to more than three hundred thousand, and had ordained or participated in the ordination of all the bishops of the church who were living in 1880.

At the Conference of 1844 Payne moved a resolution to institute a compulsory course of studies for the edu-

<sup>1</sup> "Sketch of Edward Watters," by Bishop Wayman.

cation of the ministry. Supposing it would carry, he made no speech, but with indignation the resolution was voted down by an overwhelming majority. The next day a brother moved to reconsider. Then the aged Bishop Brown arose and "addressed the understanding, the consciences, and the passions of the audience, till it was bathed in tears and from many a voice was heard the impassioned cry, 'Give us the resolution! Give us the resolution!'" It was then carried without a dissenting voice, a committee appointed, and an excellent course of study arranged.<sup>1</sup>

The constitution and by-laws for a Missionary Society were adopted, and it was organized the same year; in 1848 they were readopted, and the work, which had languished, vigorously promoted. The General Conference of 1852 had to deal with the question of licensing women to preach, and the proposition was voted down by a large majority. W. Nazrey and D. A. Payne were elected bishops. Payne was a native of Charleston, S. C., and was trained as a theologian in the Gettysburg Seminary. Nazrey was a native of Virginia, and at the time of his election a resident of Philadelphia.

The "Christian Recorder," under the title of the "Christian Herald," was created by the General Conference of 1848. By 1855 the progress of the church in New England elicited expressions of gratification throughout the denomination. The Home Missionary Society contributed much to its growth there and elsewhere.

On petition of the Canadian churches, authority was given in 1856 for a separation. In determining the constitution of the British Methodist Episcopal Church, the articles of faith of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with some modifications, and the rules of the Discipline, were

<sup>1</sup> Payne, pp. 169, 170.

adopted, and Bishop Nazrey was chosen the first bishop of the new church.

The church in the United States founded an institution called Union Seminary, which did not succeed. A committee was appointed in 1853 by the Cincinnati Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to inquire into and report what best could be done to promote the interests of the people of color. It recommended the opening of a school, and in 1856 was founded Wilberforce University, of which Richard S. Rust, an alumnus of Wesleyan University, was the third president; he conducted its affairs with skill and zeal from 1858 until 1863, when it was sold to the African Methodist Episcopal Church for ten thousand dollars. Among the students whom Rust educated were Hunt, who was for four years book-steward, and Cain, first superintendent of missions in South Carolina, senator of that State, a member of Congress, and in 1880 elected bishop.

The church had twenty thousand members in 1856, mostly located in the Northern States, but within the next ten years it had increased in membership to seventy-five thousand, besides gaining fifty per cent. in property. During the next ten years the value of the property was multiplied nearly fourfold, and in 1890 it was valued at \$6,468,280. Although at the beginning of the late war the majority of the members were in the North, more than two thirds are now in the Southern States. The progress of the church in South Carolina and Georgia has been extraordinary, and according to the census of 1890 the number of communicants was 452,725, worshipping in 4124 church edifices, whose estimated seating capacity was 1,160,838.

As the result of negotiations begun in 1880, the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of

America and the British Methodist Episcopal Church of the Dominion of Canada were united, and in 1884 the bishops issued a proclamation decreeing and affirming the completion of their organic union. This introduced into the list of bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church R. R. Disney, who had been ordained by Wayman in 1875.

While the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was in session in Philadelphia in 1864, the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was also sitting in that city. On May 23d Jabez P. Campbell and Alexander W. Wayman were ordained bishops. The Methodist Episcopal Church sent a delegation of five members to the African Methodist Episcopal Church Conference, to express their fraternal regard and notify them that they would cordially receive a similar delegation; it was appointed, and Campbell was a member, and made a profound impression by his unstudied eloquence.

The denomination so increased in number that in 1868 James A. Shorter, Thomas M. D. Ward, and John M. Brown were elected bishops; at the conference at St. Louis in 1880 H. M. Turner, of Georgia, and W. F. Dickerson, of New York, and R. H. Cain, of the South Carolina Conference, were elected and ordained bishops; and in 1888 Wesley J. Gaines, Benjamin W. Arnett, Benjamin T. Tanner, and Abraham Grant were ordained to the same office. Arnett was already famous for eloquence, and Tanner widely known as preacher and editor. Benjamin F. Lee, Moses B. Salter, and James A. Handy were added to the episcopacy in 1892.

The Discipline contains a doctrinal department entitled "Catechism on Faith," consisting of quotations from Wesley's "Works"; it makes the bishops members of the

General Conference, also the other general officers, and admits laymen, two for each Annual Conference district. The restrictions upon the powers of the General Conference are unalterable, with the exception of the one regulating the appropriations of the Book Concern, which may be changed by a vote of two thirds of the General Conference.

The Discipline of 1892 describes fifty-one existing conferences, and makes provision for nine to be added. This includes the home and foreign work. Among these conferences are Bermuda, Demerara, which embraces the territory of British, French, and Dutch Guiana, Trinidad, St. Thomas, Haiti, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

The amount raised by the African Methodist Episcopal Church for missions during the four years ending April 30, 1896, was \$66,819.27, of which \$12,000 were received from the government of Haiti for work in that country, \$30,000 were appropriated to the home department in the United States, and \$19,419.27 to the foreign department. It sustains nine ministers in the San Domingo Annual Conference, two in the Haitian, four in the Demerara, nine in the Sierra Leone Annual Conference, and fourteen in the Liberian. To increase interest in the cause, the department of missions has recently issued a periodical, "The Voice of Missions," which is edited by Bishop Turner, while the women publish "Woman's Light and Love for Heathen Africa," a monthly magazine.

Educational work is carried forward upon a large scale. During the last four years the receipts from various sources amounted to \$301,327.34. Twelve years ago the church undertook to raise \$1,000,000 for school purposes in the shortest possible time. Up to May in the last year \$690,013.31 had been raised. Six of their fifty-two institutions, with Wilberforce at the head in every respect, are known as universities, six as colleges, the rest being de-

scribed as institutes, academies, and schools. Seven of the schools are in the Indian Territory, and eleven in foreign mission fields.

According to an editorial in the "Christian Recorder" for September 10, 1896, the number of members was 599,141 on May 1, 1896. The number of itinerant preachers is given at 4365, but the number of probationers is not specified. The number of church edifices was 4575, and of higher institutions of learning, 41. The value of property in church buildings is \$8,650,155; of school buildings, \$756,475; number of parsonages, 1650.

The bishops are H. M. Turner, B. W. Arnett, B. T. Tanner, W. J. Gaines, Abraham Grant, B. F. Lee, M. B. Salter, James A. Handy, W. B. Derrick, J. C. Embry, J. H. Armstrong.

After the organization of the AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH, Abraham Thomson, James Varick, and Leavin Smith, who at that time received elders' orders, proceeded to ordain others. During the year 1820 churches were organized in New Hampshire and Philadelphia, and James Varick, a native of the State of New York, was ordained bishop. He was already an able debater and an eloquent and forcible preacher. Bishop Jones, in his sketch of James Varick,<sup>1</sup> says that he was born in 1795. Bishop Hood<sup>2</sup> affirms that he was born in the city of New York about 1750, and was one of the nine official members who formed the Zion Church in New York City in 1796. According to Bishop Moore, in his "History of the Church," he was one of the nine male members who made the first movement toward the establishment of Zion Church. This would make him seventy years of age when elected bishop. He died in 1827.

<sup>1</sup> "Lives of Methodist Bishops."

<sup>2</sup> "One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church."

A General Conference was held in 1828, and Christopher Rush elected to the episcopacy. He was born a slave, joined the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1803, and became a preacher twelve years later. Beginning with one Annual Conference, like other branches of Methodism, its growth compelled it to divide, and the year after Rush was elected bishop the Philadelphia Conference was organized with fourteen members, not including the bishop. The New York Conference had ten members. The whole membership of the church was about two thousand.

From the time Varick died until 1840 Rush was the only bishop. William Miller, the senior elder, was elected assistant superintendent in 1840.

George Galbreth was elected assistant in 1848, against the wishes of a powerful minority. In 1852 he, William H. Bishop, and George H. Spywood were elected on an equality. Galbreth died the following year, and trouble arose concerning the exact relation of Bishop Bishop. He was summoned to trial, but did not respond, and was declared suspended. This caused a division. Those who adhered to Bishop called themselves the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and held territory from Philadelphia south and westward; the others retained most of New York, New England, and Nova Scotia, and the name by which the entire denomination is now known. The East favored a general and an assistant superintendent, elected quadrennially; the rest held stronger views of episcopalianism, although there was a mixture of sentiment in both sections.

After eight years of strife the controversy reached the civil courts. In 1858 the spirit of union became uppermost in the two factions, and in Newburg, N. Y., a convention was held which adopted a platform of union consisting of seven sections, among which were resolutions that

all matters pertaining to former difficulties were to be laid aside forever; that all parties were to use both books of Discipline till the General Conference of 1860, then to organize under the Discipline of 1851, and adopt a Discipline suiting the wants of the whole body. A convention of the two factions was held on the 6th of the following month in Zion Church.

The union was consummated, and the body elected Peter Ross, J. J. Clinton, and W. H. Bishop, bishops; but the denomination was unable to maintain three bishops, and Ross, the least influential, could not secure a support, and at the end of three years resigned.

The laity were admitted in 1851 to representation in both Annual and General Conferences. Hood justly says, "The ministers in Zion Church, almost from its organization, were more liberal toward the laity than any other branch of Episcopal Methodism." Each Annual Conference is entitled to two lay delegates to the General Conference, except such as have but one ministerial delegate; and each station and circuit has the privilege of sending one lay delegate to the Annual Conference. These cannot vote, but the district conference immediately preceding the meeting of the Annual Conference may elect three lay delegates, or a less number, to represent the district, who are entitled to vote. Where there are no district conferences the lay delegates present are entitled to elect a number of representatives equal to one quarter of the circuits and stations included in the conference district.

At the Conference of 1884 the word "male" was stricken from the Discipline, so that the sexes are equally eligible to all positions, lay and clerical, in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

As late as 1860 there were but six Annual Conferences, and the connection was confined to sections of the Eastern



and Middle States; 92 of a total of 197 ministers were living, and there were 5000 members.

Toward the close of the war the church advanced into the South, sending down Hood, afterward bishop, who arrived in Newberne, N. C., in January, 1864, where he received into the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church about four hundred members, who had formed a society previously connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Before that year closed the North Carolina Conference was established with eleven ministers. An effort was made to unite the Bethel and Zion churches, but it did not succeed, though a platform was prepared.

The General Conference of 1864 added S. D. Talbot, J. W. Brooks, and J. W. Loguen to the episcopal board. Loguen resigned and Bishop was retired at his own request. The church was now represented from Louisiana to Nova Scotia, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

An attempt was made in 1868 by Gilbert Haven and others to promote a union with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Hood says that it was proposed that they should have a *pro rata* representation in the episcopal board; "Haven was perfectly honest and thought he could manage it." A delegate was sent to Chicago, but while perhaps a majority of the body was inclined to concur with Haven, Henry Slicer and a powerful minority contended against it, and it came to naught.

J. W. Loguen, who had resigned, was brought forward and reëlected, and J. J. Moore and S. T. Jones were also elected in 1868. In 1872 Brooks was retired and Loguen died. Only one bishop was added in that year. From 1864 to 1876 the connection doubled five times, and in the latter year numbered two hundred and twenty-five thousand. After 1868 the episcopacy was made a life office, but to continue to exercise its functions the bishop

had to be reëlected every four years. If not reëlected he was considered retired, but could retain his title. This proving an unsatisfactory arrangement, in 1880 the rule was changed by an almost unanimous vote, so that without reëlection the bishop should remain in office during good behavior.

Efforts were made in 1880 to put the official paper of the church upon a proper basis. Twenty years before the "Anglo-African" was adopted, but ran a short course. Then the "Zion Standard and Weekly Review" was started, and nearly eight thousand dollars spent in the effort to establish a connectional journal. Afterward the "Zion Christian Advocate" was begun in Washington, but only three numbers were issued. The "Star of Zion" was then started, and adopted by this General Conference as a permanent organ of the connection. The church also published the "African Methodist Episcopal Zion Quarterly," of which John C. Dancy is the editor. He studied at Howard University, Washington, has occupied many public positions, has been a member of four General Conferences, and while abroad lectured in the United Kingdom with great acceptability.

The same conference provided for the establishment of Livingstone College. Many efforts had been made to promote education. The first was the founding of Rush Academy in the State of New York, but after twenty years nothing had been accomplished, and it was proposed to locate Rush University at Fayetteville, O. Zion Hill Collegiate Institute, under the special patronage of the senior bishop, Clinton, was established, and its failure broke his heart. Zion Wesley Institute was started at Concord, N. C., in 1878, but was removed to Salisbury. It promised success, and in 1880 was adopted by the General Conference; Joseph C. Price was appointed

agent, and the name of the institution was changed to Livingstone College. Price afterward became its president. He was without admixture of other than negro blood, was graduated from Lincoln University, and had been a member of the North Carolina Conference for four years. At the end of his third year he was advanced to elder's and deacon's orders and elected to the General Conference without ever having been a member of the Annual Conference. His abilities were remarkable. At that conference he was called upon to respond to the fraternal messenger from the African Methodist Episcopal Church Bethel. He had but a few moments' notice, yet delivered an astonishingly eloquent discourse. So attractive was he in conversation that with the greatest ease he could obtain money for the college. While in England he raised ten thousand dollars for that purpose. He was a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference in the City Road Chapel, London, and in an address of five minutes reached the highest point of eloquence attained in the two weeks' session of representatives of Methodism from all parts of the world. He died young, but was worthy of being compared, not in style, but in effectiveness as an orator, with Frederick Douglass.

At the centennial of the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, in 1884, the spirit of union for a short time rose to a great height, and plans for the consolidation of Bethel and Zion were made, but came to nothing.

On account of loss of sight Rush was compelled to retire from the active duties of the episcopacy in 1852; he lived until 1873, dying in his ninety-sixth year.

The first Discipline of the church, in 1820, declared: "We will not receive any person into our societies who is a slave-holder. Any one who is now a member and holds

a slave or slaves and refuses to emancipate them, after notice is given to such member by the pastor in charge, shall be excluded."

This law not only accounted in large measure for the rapid spread of the church in the South at the close of the war, but long before that was the means of attracting to its membership the most distinguished American citizen of African descent.

Frederick Douglass, while yet a slave, had been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Maryland, and on arrival in New Bedford, in 1838, fully discerned the relation of that church to slavery; hence he joined a little branch of Zion, and the next year was licensed as a local preacher. He states that the exercise of his gifts in that vocation helped to prepare him for the sphere which he afterward occupied, and in closing a sketch of his connection with the church<sup>1</sup> says, "I look back to the days I spent in little Zion, New Bedford, in the several capacities of sexton, steward, class-leader, clerk, and local preacher, as among the happiest of my life." Frederick Douglass was an antislavery reformer, editor, assistant secretary of the commission to San Domingo, one of the Territorial Council of the District of Columbia, presidential elector at large for the State of New York, United States marshal for the District of Columbia, recorder of deeds for the District, minister to Haiti, a lecturer and orator worthy of being classed among the most noted.

The denomination indorses and supports the Petty High School at Lancaster, S. C., the Greenville High School in Tennessee, another of the same name in Alabama, Zion High School at Norfolk, Va., Jones University at Tuscaloosa, Ala. These are developed into seminaries as they increase.

<sup>1</sup> Hood, p. 542.

The church has continued to prosper, reporting in 1896, in its official paper, the "Star of Zion": organizations, 1981; church buildings, 1615; other places of worship, 366. The valuation of its church property is \$3,510,189, not including \$177,162, the estimated value of its 214 parsonages. Its Sunday-schools register 124,277 scholars, and the number of its traveling preachers, including 397 not ordained, amounts to 2255, and there are 470,023 members in full connection, which, with the probationers, make a total of 497,845.

The foreign missionary work was made a separate department in 1884. During ten years it has been able to devote five thousand dollars to the work, which has been expended in Africa. The bishops are J. W. Hood (senior bishop), T. H. Lomax, C. C. Petty, C. R. Harris, I. C. Clinton, and A. Walters.

THE UNION AMERICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH<sup>1</sup> has branches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Arkansas, Mississippi, and the Province of Ontario. Its Discipline was revised by the General Conference of 1890. It has availed itself of many modern features of the Methodist Episcopal Church, especially the form for reception of members after probation, and also of several of the questions propounded in the reception of traveling preachers into full connection. Among its peculiarities are officers of the General Conference known as marshals. Bishops preside over districts, of which there are four. There are four Annual Conferences, and laymen are admitted in a number equal to that of the ministers. In the Discipline there is a chapter devoted to "Female Members that are or may be Wrought upon to Preach the Word of God." After the pastor and the stewards, without prejudice or

<sup>1</sup> See p. 347.

partiality, have examined such a person and have decided that she is a suitable candidate, they designate her for a trial sermon; and when she has preached the same a two thirds' vote of the membership and officers determine whether she shall be licensed. The license gives permission to exercise her gifts and graces in the church of which she is a member and elsewhere, at such times as the pastor and officials may deem expedient. She shall have no other form of license, and shall not be considered a member of the Quarterly Conference or of the official board of the church, but amenable to it.

The total number of members in 1890 was 2279. The bishops are elected for life.

THE AFRICAN UNION METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH was organized about the same time that the African Methodist Episcopal Church arose. The Discipline of 1895 describes its title as the African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church of America and Elsewhere. This body met by representatives in a general convention in June, 1850. Another convention, of the African Union and the First Colored Methodist Protestant Church, was held in Baltimore on the 25th of November, 1865. They united and formed the present church, and held their first General Conference in 1866 in Wilmington, Del.

This body has no bishops, but each Annual Conference is vested with the power of annually electing a president. He can hold office but four years, must have been a member of the Annual Conference five years, and must be a citizen of the United States, and by a committee of five must be examined in various branches of knowledge.

The membership of this church, represented in eight States and included in two conferences and forty churches, as reported in 1890, was 3415.

A few churches of CONGREGATIONAL METHODISTS, COLORED, exist in Alabama and Texas. They were organized by presidents of the white Congregational Methodist Church. Their membership is less than 500.

The COLORED METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH was organized in 1870. According to the statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, there were in connection with that body at its organization in 1845, 124,000 colored members. By 1860 this number had increased to 207,766; but six years later only 78,742 remained in the communion.<sup>1</sup> The African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, both of which had made little progress in the South, received a majority, and another large body, including many of the preachers, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Slavery having been abolished, the federal Constitution having been amended, giving the negroes all civil rights, it was impossible to carry on the work among them according to the old method, when the gallery or a portion of the body of the house was reserved for negroes, and when special missions were established for those who were on plantations and not allowed to attend church beyond their bounds. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1866 decided that if the colored membership desired it, the bishops, "if and when their godly judgment approved, should organize them into an independent body."

Under this authorization, during the year following the adjournment of the conference the bishops formed several Annual Conferences of colored preachers, a scheme which proved highly satisfactory. After experience and reflection a general and earnest desire for an independent

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire, "History of Methodism," p. 670.

church was expressed by preachers and members. According to the account given by Bishop Holsey<sup>1</sup> the ground of this desire was that it would be better for both white and colored people to have separate churches and schools. Accordingly the preachers of the colored conferences asked the General Conference of 1870 to appoint a commission to confer with their own delegates. The result was that in December, 1870, a new body was formed under the counsel and general superintendence of Bishops Paine and McTyeire, who presided at a convention held in Jackson, Tenn., and set apart the colored conferences, eight in number. The body chose its own name, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church; adopted the Articles of Religion and Form of Government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, determined to elect bishops for life, and then and there so elected W. H. Miles and R. H. Vanderhorst. Miles, a native of Kentucky, had been a minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and a missionary for the Society in 1867.

The General Conference which authorized the establishment of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America ordered that all church property which had been acquired, held, and used for Methodist negroes be turned over to them by Quarterly Conferences and trustees. The valuation of this property is variously estimated at from \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000.<sup>2</sup> Membership in the body is restricted to negroes. The Discipline forbids the using of the church houses for political speeches and meetings.

During the quarter of a century which has elapsed since its organization the church has prospered. It has three conferences in Texas, two each in Tennessee, Mississippi,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Holsey in the "Independent" for March 5, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> McTyeire, p. 671.



Georgia; besides the Arkansas Conference it has a Little Rock Conference, also one each in Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri and Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. It observes Children's day and promotes education, but has no foreign missions. Its Church Extension Society has been established, but may be said to be in a formative condition. Its publishing interests have given it much trouble. The "Christian Index" is the organ of the denomination. A new paper, edited by Bishop Holsey, has been established at Atlanta, Ga.

The first General Conference of the METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH assembled in Georgetown, D. C., May 6, 1834.<sup>1</sup> Standing committees were appointed upon the Executive, Judiciary, Means of Grace, Missions, and Literature; a Board of Foreign Missions was constituted, also a Book Committee. Nicholas Snethen and Asa Shinn were elected joint editors of the "Methodist Protestant." As the patronage did not justify the employment of two editors, at the end of the first year Snethen was retired, and at the close of the second Shinn was superseded, and for purposes of economy an unmarried man made editor. There were difficulties because of what Shinn considered unwarrantable interference on the part of a subcommittee with his prerogatives as editor. Before this arrangements had been made for a General Conference once in seven years, but a special session was ordered, and it was determined that the General Conference should assemble quadrennially.

A literary institution was established in 1836 at Lawrenceville, Ind.; for a time it was conducted by Snethen, but in consequence of the lack of financial support and the destruction of the buildings by fire the enterprise was abandoned.

<sup>1</sup> For origin see pp. 365-369.

The General Conference of 1838 was marked by exciting and acrimonious debates upon the subject of slavery. Thomas H. Stockton was elected editor of the church paper. As the church constitution had made it free, and the General Conference had declared that it should be so, he went to Baltimore to enter upon the duties of his office, but found that on the slavery question the Book Committee, "right in the teeth of the constitution, and over the action of the General Conference, had gagged the paper." He therefore declined the chair, and Eli Y. Reese was appointed. Brown, in his "Autobiography," says, "He filled his position with ability, but alas for him and for us all, in a free country and in a free church he edited a gagged paper." Bassett<sup>1</sup> states the case for the committee.

When the General Conference of 1842 convened in Baltimore it was besieged by memorials on the subject of slavery and by reports of the action of at least eight Annual Conferences. These were referred to a select committee, which brought in majority and minority reports. After much debate both were indefinitely postponed, and by a meager majority of three a compromise resolution was adopted, which was: "That slavery is not under all circumstances a sin, yet under some circumstances it is a sin, and under such circumstances should be discouraged by the Methodist Protestant Church;" but, "The General Conference does not feel authorized by the constitution to legislate on the subject of slavery; and by a solemn vote we present to the church our judgment that the different Annual Conferences respectively should make their own regulations on this subject so far as authorized by the constitution." Most of the affirmative vote was cast by Southerners, and most of the negative by Northerners.

<sup>1</sup> "Concise History of the Methodist Protestant Church."

The General Conference of 1846 laid upon the table a resolution declaring that "the practice of buying or selling men, women, or children, with the intention of enslaving them or holding them in slavery, where emancipation is practicable, is an offense condemned by the Word of God," and adopted the compromise statement which had been passed in 1842. The membership was reported at 63,567.

The slavery question agitated the General Conference of 1850, but the body declared by resolution that it had no jurisdiction over the subject, and referred the matter to the Annual Conferences. Reese, the editor, had refused to publish the minutes of the North Illinois Conference in relation to slavery, and it was moved to condemn him for so doing; but the conference, after debate, vindicated him. This led to the establishment of the "Western Methodist Protestant" and a Book Concern.

Madison College proved a financial failure, and the enterprise was relinquished and the property sold in 1857.

Conventions were held to discuss the subject of slavery, and memorials were sent to the General Conference of 1858 asking for the elimination from the constitution and Discipline of everything that could directly or indirectly justify the practice of slave-holding and slave-dealing, and petitioning for the insertion of a clause that voluntary slave-holding and slave-dealing would be a bar to membership; but that body disregarded the memorials. The excitement continued. Reese was reelected editor of the "Methodist Protestant," and the church divided.

Negotiations were begun, in 1867, looking toward a union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church. The latter asked the former to strike out the word "South" and insert the word "Protestant" if the word "Episcopal" were retained; to dis-

pense with the presiding eldership; to have as many bishops as Annual Conferences; to give itinerant ministers the right of appeal from the stationing power; to concede no veto power to the bishops; and to make other radical changes. The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, responded to each point separately, definitely for or against, but the negotiations availed nothing.

The nineteen conferences of the Northern and Western branches held their organizing convention November 10, 1858, in Springfield, O. All in the non-slave-holding States were represented but those of Maine and Oregon, remote and small. They voted almost unanimously to strike the word "white" from the constitution, and to insert the declaration that "the buying or selling of men, women, or children, or holding them in slavery as they are held in these United States, is inconsistent with the morality of the Holy Scriptures," and appointed the necessary committees, one of which proposed to accept the proposition of Cyrus Prindle, book-agent of the Wesleyan Connection in America, to prepare a joint hymn-book, and ordered the publication of a new Discipline, as amended by the convention. It made arrangements for the call of a convention at Pittsburg in 1860. Another assembled on the 5th of November, 1862, which was invested with full legislative powers. That year the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church had failed to meet because of the Civil War. They therefore declared that the Methodist churches in the West and North were absolved from obligation to ask of the Methodist Protestant conferences in the Southern States official concurrence in their action, and were "left entirely free to maintain the act of suspension adopted in Springfield, O., in 1858."

The initiative had been taken in 1859 for the consolidation of the Methodist Protestants and the Wesleyans, and

in 1865 Cyrus Prindle arrived from the latter body to advocate union. Meanwhile Hiram Mattison, a very able and widely known member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, had organized an independent church in the city of New York. He and representatives of other independent Methodist churches appointed in 1864 a committee to confer with the committees of other Methodist bodies with the purpose of uniting in one all non-Episcopal Methodists. A convention for that purpose met, and recommended the calling of a delegated assembly in May, 1866, in Cincinnati, with power to fix the basis of union and the method of consummating it. One hundred and forty ministerial and lay delegates attended. The free-State conferences of the Methodist Protestant Church and the Wesleyan body were represented numerously, and there were delegates from some other independent bodies. The Free Methodists sent no representatives, and in the interval Mattison had returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The result was that the new organization decided upon the name of the "Methodist Church," and adopted with few modifications the regular constitution of the Methodist Protestant Church, as revised by the convention of 1858.

The first General Conference of the METHODIST CHURCH was held in Cleveland, O., May, 1867. The new organization, from the statistics available, appeared to have a membership of 49,030; nevertheless not a single conference of the Wesleyan denomination was represented, and only four of its ministers and three of its laymen were present. The leaders who had proposed and advocated the union had either returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church or made arrangements to do so.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning this, Martin, in his "History of Wesleyan

<sup>1</sup> Bassett, "History of the Methodist Protestant Church."

Methodism,"<sup>1</sup> says: "In the final outcome the Methodist Protestants generally went into the new organization, which took the name of the 'Methodist Church,' while the Wesleyan Methodists pretty generally remained out of it and maintained their own denominational identity."

The next General Conference was held in Pittsburg.

Adrian College, in the city of the same name in Michigan, was projected in 1857, chiefly on account of the representations of Dr. Asa Mahan, who induced the people of that city to give a site and to subscribe thirty thousand dollars for the erection of a college. The Wesleyan Methodists obligated themselves to conduct it and to endow it within five years with the sum of one hundred thousand dollars. The college was opened in 1859, and was carried on for several years by the devotion of its instructors and liberal gifts by its friends for current expenses. But the efforts to secure the endowment failed, and the trustees proposed to the Methodist Protestant convention to coöperate with them; but no satisfactory arrangements were then made. Subsequently a plan was devised which for a time bade fair to succeed. Discussions on the subject had caused some alienation of feeling, but the announcement was made that the college had become the property of the Methodist Church.

A compilation of hymns, chiefly by Alexander Clark, was adopted. He was continued in the editorship of the "Methodist Recorder."

The General Conference of 1875 found much to encourage it. The publishing affairs, the "Methodist Recorder," and Adrian College, were in better condition than ever before. A leading and honored member of the Methodist Protestant Church now appeared as fraternal messenger,

<sup>1</sup> "The Wesleyan Manual; or, History of Wesleyan Methodism," p. 141, by Joel Martin (Syracuse, N. Y., Wesleyan Methodist Publishing House).

with assurances of a rapidly growing sentiment in the church in favor of an organic union. The response of the Methodist Church represented it as in full tide of progress toward reunion. Nine commissioners were ordered to be elected to confer with a similar body elected by the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church. The preceding year William Hunter appeared as fraternal messenger from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the senior bishop, Janes, arrived unofficially and addressed the conference for an hour, distinctly favoring organic union for all branches of Methodism.<sup>1</sup>

Delegates of both branches appeared in 1876 before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 1877 the general conventions of the Methodist Church and the Methodist Protestant Church respectively assembled at the same time in Baltimore. After discussion in each body, the basis of union was adopted, a committee of arrangements for merging the two conventions presented a plan, and on Wednesday afternoon, May 16, 1876, the union was consummated, and congratulations from other Methodist bodies were received.

Since that time the denomination has steadily increased. The president, Dr. J. W. Herring, of Westminster, Md., in his report to the seventeenth quadrennial session of the General Conference, convened in Kansas City, Kan., in May, 1896, observed that as a result of his four years' experience in the presidency he was convinced that the conferences and churches freest from trouble and doing the best work were those that most scrupulously respected church law. He declared that the church was steadily growing, that its principles were more and more recognized as furnishing a true foundation for the highest and best ecclesiastical system, and declared that "it would glad-

<sup>1</sup> Bassett, "History of the Methodist Protestant Church."

den the heart of every true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ if the barriers which now exist between our Methodisms were broken down and gone forever."

Thirty-eight conferences and missions were represented. They show the denomination to be the largest in Maryland, the State of its origin; the next in order of numbers are North Carolina and West Virginia, but the latter conference has a few appointments in Virginia, Delaware, and New Jersey.

The denomination has a permanent invested fund for ministerial education, recognizes the Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavor, and asserts the vital necessity of complete connection between the church and such societies. The Pittsburg directory reports its present assets over liabilities to be above \$53,000, and the Baltimore directory is solvent and with a small surplus. Besides these the church prints five Sunday-school periodicals. Its home mission department expended in the four years preceding the last conference about \$30,000. The Women's Home Missionary Society was established in 1894, and modeled after those in other denominations. In four years \$52,260 had been received for the cause of foreign missions. The Women's Missionary Society had gleaned during the quadrennium nearly \$18,000.

The Western Maryland College, Adrian College, and the Kansas City University are recognized as official institutions of the highest grade. The first of these has greatly prospered, and on the basis of its prosperity it appeals to the church for endowment funds, new halls, and the support of the library. The report to the conference of the president of Adrian College represents it as enlarging its facilities, and finding a foremost place among institutions dedicated to sound learning. The Kansas City University has recently been established, chiefly by benefac-



tions and bequests from the late Dr. S. F. Mather, of that place. The corner-stone of the university was laid while the conference was in session.

The statistical reports of the denomination show 1550 ministers, 2267 churches, 179,092 members, and 4624 probationers.

In addition to Snethen and Shinn, the founders, worthy of ranking among the most eminent men of American Methodism, the Methodist Protestant Church has produced others, whose names will not be omitted from the history of Christianity in the United States. Of these the most noted was Thomas H. Stockton, the eldest son of William S. Stockton, the originator and publisher of the "Wesleyan Repository." He early turned to literature, and while young attempted successively several professions. At the age of twenty-one he preached his first sermon, and so eloquent was he that his first circuit proved his last, which meant much in 1830. He was stationed in Baltimore, and sat with his father as a member of the convention which formed the constitution and Discipline of the church. He was elected editor of the church paper, but declined. The next year, on account of feeble health, he was returned missionary at large, and began to publish his poems. He became chaplain of the House of Representatives at Washington in 1835, where his spiritual influence was felt and his eloquence increased his fame. He spent nine years in Philadelphia as a pastor, frequently preaching with wonderful fervor when increasing feebleness compelled him to sit. This was the case in 1859 and 1861 and the intervening period, when he was again elected chaplain of the House of Representatives. Though unable to stand, he retained his clearness and strength of voice, and his prayer at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pa., was so impressive as to have a marked

influence upon President Lincoln, who was his personal friend, and who on good authority is said to have experienced from that hour a religious change. Horace Greeley and Mr. Stockton were personal friends, and the "Tribune" in announcing his death declared that during that part of his life "when his physical strength was sufficient for protracted pulpit efforts he had no peer as a pulpit orator in this country."<sup>1</sup>

Alexander Clark, as preacher, platform speaker, editor, and prolific author, was favorably known on both continents, and among his nine works none was more beautiful than his "Gospel in the Trees," and none more pathetic than "Memory's Tribute to the Life, Character, and Work of the Rev. T. H. Stockton."

The CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH was organized in 1852 by seceders from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who incorporated therein the views which caused them to secede. Various churches were organized in Georgia, Mississippi, and other States in the South, but in 1888 the majority of the churches and ministers became Congregationalists. According to the census of 1890 the original Congregational Methodist Church had 8765 members, 214 organizations, 150 church edifices, and was represented in all the Southern States except Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Louisiana. This body differs from Congregationalism in admitting appeals from the local church to a district conference, thence to a State conference, and thence to a General Conference. Its pastors are settled; it has class-leaders and stewards; and its district conferences meet semi-annually, State conferences annually, and General Conferences once in four years. Nearly one third of its communicants are in Alabama.

<sup>1</sup> Bassett, "History of the Methodist Protestant Church."

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From the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, another secession took place in 1881 which formed the denomination known as the NEW CONGREGATIONAL METHODISTS. Though a number of the churches which united with it became Congregationalists in 1888, two years later the census gave the denomination 1059 communicants, 24 churches, and 17 edifices in Florida and Georgia; the average value of these was less than \$250.

The Discipline of the WESLEYAN METHODIST CONNECTION OR CHURCH OF AMERICA differs in various particulars from those of other branches of Methodism. The first section consists of elementary principles. The Articles of Religion are twenty-one in number, the majority resembling those of other Methodist bodies. Article 7 is upon relative duties, a succinct statement of the relations of men to one another under the gospel, in their individual, social, and religious capacities. Articles 13 and 14 have been added during the last quadrennium. The former defines regeneration in the usual way; the latter deals with a subject which has been much debated in Methodism: "Entire sanctification is that work of the Holy Spirit by which the child of God is cleansed from all inbred sin through faith in Jesus Christ. It is subsequent to regeneration, and is wrought when the believer presents himself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, and is thus enabled through grace to love God with all the heart and to walk in his holy commandments blameless."

Its regulations are stringent against connection with secret societies. The terms of the law are: "When any member of our church shall join any secret society, and, after being labored with, refuses to withdraw from said secret society, the person so offending shall without trial be declared withdrawn from the church." Church trials

shall be in public when the accused party demands it. The General Conference consists of an equal number of ministers and laymen, and the editor, agent, and general missionary superintendent, by virtue of their respective offices, and a layman for each of these officials, elected by the conferences wherein they hold their respective memberships, are also members. The General Conference meets quadrennially and has the usual powers, but is forbidden to "contravene the maintenance of the itinerant ministry, lay delegation, any of the elementary principles, the Articles of Religion, or the general rules."

Unstationed ministers have seats in the Annual Conferences as honorary members, and are allowed to speak, but not to vote. These conferences have charge of the ministers and churches within their bounds, but not of the editor, and hold that any elder who promises to serve as pastor a church or congregation other than Wesleyan Methodist shall be considered as withdrawn, unless he have the consent of the Annual Conference. The Discipline requires that ministers and members shall favor the use of the Bible in the public schools, and that the name of almighty God, as the basis of authority in civil government, shall be considered as one of the fundamental principles of the Wesleyan Connection of America; and it imposes upon ministers and members the duty of using all feasible means to secure such amendments in national and State constitutions so that the name of God shall be inserted in these instruments. It implores its members not to use tobacco, and declares that it will not receive as licentiates or ministers, nor ordain or license to preach or exhort, those who are addicted to it.

The Book Concern of the church is located at Syracuse. There are published in connection with it the "Wesleyan Methodist," a weekly, and a religious monthly magazine,

the "Gospel Record," and four Sabbath-school papers, one of which is devoted to temperance. These interests are managed by a committee which is composed of the agent, editor, general missionary superintendent, six elders, and six laymen, who shall be elected by the General Conference. A remarkable provision is that this committee constitutes the Board of Managers of the connectional societies, the Wesleyan Publication Association, the Missionary Society, the Educational Society, the Superannuated Ministers' Aid Society.

The second General Conference met in New York City, and mourned the death of Orange Scott, who had died the previous year. L. C. Matlack was elected agent and Luther Lee editor. At the next General Conference Cyrus Prindle presided and John McEldowney was elected secretary.

In the first year of its existence the Wesleyan Connection opened the Dracut Seminary near Lowell, Mass. It was continued, however, for but two years. Soon afterward an institution was established at Leoni, Mich. This was successful, and under the presidency of the Rev. J. McEldowney it was removed to Adrian, Mich., and made a college. Subsequently it was supported jointly by the Wesleyans and the Methodist Protestants, but the abortive attempts to unite all non-Episcopal Methodists led to the withdrawal of the Wesleyan interests though thousands of dollars of their capital remained in it. Another college was established at Wheaton, Ill., which after an existence of several years invited the Congregationalists to a joint control.

From the date of its organization in 1843 to the fall of the next year the membership of the Wesleyan Connection increased from six thousand to fifteen thousand, and in 1875 it had no more. The war against secret societies

excluded it from access to many, and after slavery was destroyed nearly one hundred ministers, accompanied by thousands of communicants, returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The membership is comprehended in the following conferences: Allegheny, Central Ohio, Champlain, Dakota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Lockport, Miami, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, North Michigan, Rochester, South Carolina, South Kansas, South Ohio, Syracuse, Tennessee, West Tennessee, Willamette, and Wisconsin. The number of members reported in 1895 is 16,100. Comparing this with the report of 1891 shows a gain during the quadrennium of 894.

At the General Conference of 1895 the Minnesota Conference reported its official action proposing to modify the rules relating to secret societies, dress, and furniture, with a motion of disloyalty to the present rules if they were not changed. The conference not only refused to comply with the proposition, but passed a report declaring that "the spirit of secretism is contrary to the spirit of the gospel; that membership in any secret society, great or small, is incompatible with membership in the church of Jesus Christ; that dependence for personal benefit upon any promise, oath, or pledge is inconsistent with the faith that should characterize professed believers and an open insult to God; that fellowship in the societies is contrary to the Word of God; that their existence is inimical to a peaceful government, a menace to the church, a constant encouragement to idolatry, revelry, looseness of morals; that to have secrecy as a creed is in itself criminal; that as between all phases of it the difference in moral turpitude is more one of appearance than of fact." The conference declared that on this question as a unit they would sink or swim, rise or fall, survive or perish. With special ref-

erence to the threat of rebellion the conference resolved: "When any number or part of a church belonging to the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America shall put itself in an attitude of rebellion against any of the doctrines or principles of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America, this General Conference hereby declares the loyal member or members of said church to be the Wesleyan Methodist Church of that particular place, and duly entitled to hold the church property."<sup>1</sup>

The origin of the PRIMITIVE METHODISTS was romantic. Lorenzo Dow went to England in the first decade of the present century, and introduced American camp-meetings. Some of the Wesleyan ministers favored them, and in 1807 the Wesleyan Conference pronounced an official judgment that, "supposing such meetings to be allowable in America, they are highly improper in England, and likely to be productive of considerable mischief, and we disclaim all connection with them." This deterred the traveling preachers from further participation. William Clough, a local preacher, and Hugh Bourne, a layman of weight and one of the trustees of a Wesleyan church, through the press defended camp-meetings as a valuable method of evangelizing the masses; the Wesleyan ministers replied, and in the end Clough was expelled. Two years later two hundred sympathizers were cut off, and the outdoor meetings were continued with the result that the Primitive Methodist Connection was organized in 1810. It prospered from the beginning. The divergence upon camp-meetings was but a superficial indication. Many thought that the Wesleyans had become formal, that they had renounced the principles of Whitefield and Wesley, and had lost their hold upon the masses; the Primitive Methodists

<sup>1</sup> "Minutes of the Fourteenth Quadrennial Session of the General Conference" (Syracuse, N. Y., Wesleyan Methodist Publication Association).

originally sought to restore these things, and soon became and remained, next to the original Wesleyan Connection, the most numerous body in the kingdom. In England their conference consists of two laymen to one minister. The church was introduced into Canada by emigrants from England, and subsequently into the United States by emigrants from England and Canada. Hugh Bourne, the real founder of the body, came to this country in 1844, forming churches in different places. Its progress has not been as great in the United States as in Great Britain and the colonies. There are three Annual Conferences, independent in government, known as the Eastern, the Pennsylvania, and the Western. In 1877 the denomination had 3332 members, scattered over eight States, and thirteen years later it reported 4764.

During its brief history the FREE METHODIST CHURCH has furnished many illustrations of heroic self-denial, and has succeeded in introducing its societies into thirty States. Its Southern California Conference has been in existence four years, and is divided into two districts, yet there are but 285 members in full and 28 probationers. There are 10 stationed preachers, and their entire receipts for support were less than \$4000. The Oregon and Washington Conference at the close of ten years shows 684 members and 178 probationers. The receipts of its 20 pastors were less than \$5000. The Genesee Conference, which includes the region in which the church was founded, is thirty-five years old, and reports 1759 members and 267 probationers, and the average income of its pastors for their services are a little more than ninety cents per day.

The gain in full members was but 2 from 1890 to the close of 1894, the total in the latter year being 22,112. There were, however, in the statistical summary 430 probationers. Limited as are the resources of this small



number, it endeavors to maintain foreign missions in Africa, India, San Domingo, and Japan. In East Africa the members number 24; in Natal, South Africa, 9; in India they have 1 station, no members reported; and the property is valued at \$1150. The total receipts for foreign missions for the year ending October, 1894, were \$2900, and for the preceding four years \$20,669.

The denomination has given much attention to educational development, and supports Greenville College in Illinois, Chesbrough Seminary in New York, the Washington Springs Seminary in South Dakota, the Evansville Seminary in Wisconsin, the Seattle Seminary in Washington, the Spring Arbor Seminary in Jackson, Mich., the Wessington Springs Seminary in South Dakota, and the Neosho Rapids Seminary in Kansas.

Like the Wesleyan Connection of America, the Free Methodists expel members who join and continue in any society which requires an oath, an affirmation, or a promise of secrecy as a condition of membership. It prohibits the use of intoxicating wine in celebrating the Lord's Supper, and by a specific resolution forbids the wearing of gold wedding-rings.

Besides these there are twelve independent organizations in Maryland, one in the District of Columbia and one in Tennessee, the total membership being 2500. Some of them were founded by laymen of wealth, and their church property is valued at more than a quarter of a million dollars.

The UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST is supposed by many to be a branch of American Methodism. The association between their founders and the similarity of their origin have often been noted. When Asbury was consecrated to the office of bishop, William Otterbein, who more than any other deserves the name of the founder of

the United Brethren, was requested by Asbury to assist in the service, and the affectionate relation continues between all branches of Methodism and the United Brethren, though the body does not come within the scope of this work. It is treated fully and luminously by D. Berger, D.D., in volume xii. of the American Church History Series.

Albright, the founder of the EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION, trained a Lutheran, converted under Reagel, an independent preacher, declared his adherence to the Methodists, but under the influence of a divine call left the body. Much similarity exists between Methodism and the Evangelical Association, but it is in every sense of the word a distinct organization, deriving its original impulse from another source.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See volume xii., American Church History Series, "Evangelical Association," by Samuel P. Spreng.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### SALIENT POINTS IN THE PROGRESS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

THE first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, vigorously discussed, from its point of view, the action of the authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and particularly the course pursued by the official organs at New York and Cincinnati, which, it declared, "attacked the provisions of the Plan of Separation with an emphatic and unscrupulous hostility. With an unflinching purpose worthy of a better cause they have denounced it as unconstitutional; contemned the authority which enacted it; advised resistance to it; pledged character, influence, and religion for its overthrow. . . . The terms 'schismatics,' 'disorganizers,' and 'seceders' have become stereotyped phrases of reproach, to the detriment not only of the spirit and unity of good brotherhood between the two great divisions of the Methodist Episcopal family, but also of the character of the General Conference which by so great a majority of votes adopted the plan." It further declared entirely groundless the charges against Bishops Soule and Andrew of violating the plan, restating the general position of the Southern church upon the questions involved in the slavery controversy.

The report of the Committee on Temperance was an

uncompromising condemnation of intemperance and the liquor traffic,<sup>1</sup> but the body refused to adopt the original resolution, "That, in the judgment of this General Conference, the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, or their use as a beverage, is inconsistent with the moral and religious character of a Methodist." The resolution actually passed was, "That we recommend the members of our church to unite their efforts in promoting the great temperance reformation now in successful operation."

The Committee on Missions, of which Capers was chairman, provided that, where separate accommodations for ministering to the colored people do not exist, they should be included in the same pastoral charge with the whites, both classes forming one congregation with separate sittings, as the practice usually had been. At camp-meetings colored people were to be furnished with accommodations at the back of the stand for the holding of prayer-meeting, while the whites would proceed with their prayer-meeting in front. Planters, with the consent of the Quarterly Conference, who did not think the general scheme sufficient for the instruction of their people, were authorized to employ a local preacher to serve them at their plantations, provided the same were done at hours which did not interfere with the regular public worship.

Transylvania University, at Lexington, Ky., was practically adopted by the denomination. The Nashville, the Southern, and the Richmond "Christian Advocates" were made official. John B. McFerrin was elected editor of the Nashville, William M. Wightman of the Southern, and Leroy M. Lee of the Richmond "Christian Advocate"; assistant editors were also elected. H. B. Bascom, by a rising and unanimous vote, was made editor of the "Quarterly Review," and Lovick Pierce was delegated to visit

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1846," pp. 59-61.

the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Pittsburg.

A pastoral address was issued, in which the subject of slavery occupied a large place, the position being taken that, instead of the least departure from the law of the church respecting slavery, the Southern conferences had "strictly adhered to it throughout the whole struggle," and that, while they "did not claim to be better, more devoted, more worthy of imitation as Christians than [their] brethren of the North, in everything essential, everything peculiar to Methodism [they] believed the impartial evidence of history would be that [they] had been not only equal, but, in fact, even *uniquely* loyal and true to the duties and hopes of our end and calling as American Wesleyan Methodists."<sup>1</sup>

The second General Conference was held in St. Louis, Mo., in April, 1850, and after the organization Bishop Andrew read the episcopal address, which bristled with criticisms of the proceedings of the Methodist Episcopal Church, particularly with reference to its treatment of Lovick Pierce. On this subject indignation in expression took the form of irony: "The Plan of Separation was repudiated; the Southern claim to any portion of the Book Concern was denied; and the very men who from sheer hatred to slavery drove the South into separation proved their sincerity and consistency by not only retaining all the slave-holding members already under their charge, but in making arrangements to gather as many more into the fold as practicable."

It was at this conference that Henry B. Bascom, whose career had steadily gathered a more brilliant luster, was elected bishop.

The important decision was made that it is inconsistent

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1846," pp. 110-112.

with the constitution and laws of the church to depose from the ministry any one convicted of immoral conduct without, at the same time and by the same act, expelling him from the church; and that "the only legal decisions recognized by the Discipline in case of trial for immoral conduct are acquittal, suspension, and expulsion."<sup>1</sup> This action was suggested by the case of a minister who had indulged in the "intemperate and improper use of ardent spirits, and admitted himself to have been of set purpose drinking in the city of Richmond." The Annual Conference had merely deprived him of authority to exercise the functions of the Christian ministry, and recorded, in answer to the question, "Who have been expelled from the connection?" "No one; S—— B—— has been put out of the ministry."

It was decided that the interests of Transylvania University could be more advantageously secured if it were managed by the Kentucky and Louisville Annual Conferences than by a continuance of the existing relations, under which its supervision devolved upon the General Conference. Edmund W. Sehon was elected missionary secretary, Moses M. Henkle, editor of the "Ladies' Companion," Samuel A. Latta of the "Methodist Expositor," David S. Doggett of the "Quarterly Review," Chauncey Richardson of the "Texas Wesleyan Banner," and Samuel Patton of the "Methodist Episcopalian."

The task of entertaining the third General Conference, which began May 1, 1854, devolved upon the city of Columbus, Ga. The death of Bascom in his first year as a bishop, in the maturity of his faculties, influence, and usefulness, was deplored. The Book Concern was permanently located at Nashville. The bishops were instructed to visit the Indian and colored missions, and in order that

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference," p. 207.

they might be able to do this and perform other important functions, it was ordered that there be three additional bishops. On the first ballot George F. Pierce, of Georgia, was elected. He was the son of Lovick Pierce, and had been a minister twenty-three years, during which time he had filled circuits and stations, had been presiding elder, president of Georgia Female College, and for some years prior to his election president of Emory College. He was an extraordinary preacher, having every physical, mental, emotional, and moral element necessary to the highest oratory.

The next chosen was John Early, who was sixty-eight years old and had been a minister forty-seven years. As a revivalist, administrator, and organizer he seemed to have endless resources of practical wisdom, and was the first book-agent appointed after the organization of the church. On one of his circuits he received five hundred members into the church, and at the camp-meeting in Prince Edward County, Virginia, under his charge, one thousand persons were converted in seven days.

Hubbard H. Kavanaugh, of Kentucky, was the third elected. He was fifty-two years of age, and had been a minister twenty-nine years, filling the most important stations in the State, and was a connecting link with the earliest times, having been ordained by Bishops McKendree and Roberts. He was an eloquent preacher, majestic when at his best, not always systematic, but, like Bramwell of England, if he sometimes seemed to wander, it was always "from the text to the heart."

The church was now in receipt of the portion of the funds of the Book Concern assigned to it by the Supreme Court, and was able to appropriate seventy-five thousand dollars to the erection of suitable buildings.

The conference felicitated itself on the large number

of educational institutions under its patronage. Among them were 38 schools, seminaries, and colleges exclusively devoted to females, 23 for males, and 6 coeducation institutions. Among these 7 were in the Indian Mission Conference, having 425 pupils, of whom 100 were in manual-labor schools. The most important colleges for men were Randolph Macon, La Grange, Wofford, Emory, and Emory and Henry, then sixteen years old.

The report of the commissioners appointed to settle disputes concerning the division of the property of the Book Concern expressed gratitude for the kind offices of Judge McLean, of the Supreme Court of the United States, who attempted the delicate office of mediator and presided at a joint meeting of the commissioners. Finally they said: "We should not do justice to our feelings if we forbore to express our great satisfaction with the Christian courtesy and kindness which marked the intercourse of the Northern commissioners and agents in negotiating the final settlement of the New York controversy. They met us on the platform of candor, liberality, and strict justice. . . . Nor was there a feeling or a word, so far as we can judge, which in a dying hour either party would wish to blot from the pages of memory." They reported less harmony with the representatives of the Cincinnati property, and said that all the honorable judges of the Supreme Court were present at the hearing of the case except Judge McLean, who, from motives of delicacy, declined to sit; and the commissioners reported the decree of the Supreme Court in their favor and apprised the conference that some years would be required to complete the settlement.

The conference was encouraged by the increase during the last four years, the net gain being 83,047, making the membership 603,303.

At the General Conference of 1858, which sat in the



hall of the House of Representatives at Nashville, Tenn., all the living bishops, Soule, Andrew, Paine, Pierce, Early, and Kavanaugh, were present. Since the last conference the beloved William Capers had died in his sixty-fifth year. He was of national repute as an orator and had traveled abroad, was a constant reader of a few of the best books of general and theological literature, and had trained himself to rapid mental combination—to the readiness and alertness which come from concentrated reflection. He used neither manuscript nor brief, employed no formal divisions, “yet his delivery was refined, graceful, and self-restrained.”<sup>1</sup> On special occasions his word was attended with overwhelming power, whether in consolation or warning. The conference declared that his greatest honor would be that of founder of missions to the blacks in his native State.

The bishops reviewed the work in general, giving particular attention to those points where it came in contact with that of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They besought the conference to order that there should be no more weekly papers published than the church could support *creditably*, urged the more adequate endowment of literary institutions, deprecated the agitation of the subject of lay delegation, enforced the connectional principle, and besought the conference, when electing men to fill the various offices of the church, not to consider from what part of the work they came. On this subject their address contains a passage admonitory to all Christian churches: “Take, for example, the election of men to fill the various offices of the church. What should be the question asked in reference to the candidate proposed? Should it not be, ‘Is he well qualified for the work to which we design to call him?’ Of what conceivable importance can it be where he was born or to what confer-

<sup>1</sup> Sketch by Bishop Wightman.

ence he belongs? It seems to us the only question should be, 'Is he the man best fitted for the work?' and if so, that should determine our action. But if, departing from this straightforward principle, we choose men to fill important positions in the church not because they are well qualified for the work, but because they happen to belong to certain sections of the church, shall we not introduce incompetency and confusion into the church of God, and bring our ecclesiastical elections into disgraceful conformity with the contemptible trickery and demagogism which but too frequently disgrace our political elections?"<sup>1</sup>

The conference recommended to the church the support of a plan to erect a more spacious edifice in the federal capital than the little band of Southern Methodists there were able to compass. The Alabama Conference, December 15, 1856, had by memorial urged the General Conference to expunge from the General Rules the following, to wit, "The buying and selling of men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them," and had requested the bishops to pass the resolution around to all the Annual Conferences. This had been done, with the result that 1160 had voted to concur, and 311 not to do so. There was therefore a surplus over the constitutional majority of three fourths; but three of the conferences, the Pacific, Kansas Mission, and Indian Mission, had had no opportunity of voting on the resolution. This occasioned much debate, as some wished to proceed without regard to this informality. After the committee to which the subject was referred had reported, a special committee of six was ordered, to which the resolutions, amendments, and the entire question were committed. The report of that committee, as adopted on a vote of one hundred and forty-one yeas to seven nays, is as follows:

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1858," p. 401.

“ The committee appointed to report a preamble and resolutions in regard to the expunction of the rule in the General Rules forbidding ‘ the buying and selling of men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them, ’ beg leave to report the following as the result of their deliberations :

“ WHEREAS, The rule in the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, forbidding ‘ the buying and selling of men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them ’ is ambiguous in its phraseology and liable to be construed as antagonistic to the institution of slavery, in regard to which the church has no right to meddle, except in enforcing the duties of masters and servants as set forth in the Holy Scriptures ; and WHEREAS, A strong desire for the expunction of said rule has been expressed in nearly all parts of our ecclesiastical connection ; therefore,

“ *Resolved*, 1. By the delegates of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in General Conference assembled, that the rule forbidding ‘ the buying and selling of men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them ’ be expunged from the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

“ *Resolved*, 2. That, in adopting the foregoing resolution, this conference expresses no opinion in regard to the African slave-trade, to which the rule in question has been ‘ understood ’ to refer.

“ *Resolved*, 3. That the bishops or others presiding in the Annual Conferences be, and are hereby, instructed to lay the foregoing resolutions before each of the Annual Conferences at their next ensuing sessions for their concurrent action.

“ *Resolved*, 4. That the president of each Annual Conference shall be required, as soon as possible after the ad-

jourment of the conference, to report to the book-editor the vote on the resolution to expunge the rule in question; and when the book-editor shall have received returns from all the Annual Conferences voting on the said resolution, he shall lay the information before one of the bishops; and if it shall be found that there is a concurrence of three fourths of all the members of the Annual Conferences present and voting on the resolution in favor of the expunging of the rule, the bishop shall direct the book-editor to expunge it accordingly.

“*Resolved*, 5. That if any Annual Conference, or Conferences refuse or neglect to vote on the aforesaid resolution, the members of such conference or conferences shall not be counted for or against the expunging of the rule.

“*Resolved*, 6. That the publication of the foregoing preamble and resolutions in the church papers shall be considered a sufficient notification of the action of this conference in the premises.

“*Resolved*, 7. That the bishops are respectfully requested to set forth in the pastoral address the platform occupied by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the relation of masters and servants, agreeably to the principle contained in the foregoing preamble and resolutions.

“All of which is respectfully submitted.

“THOMAS O. SUMMERS, *Chairman*.

NASHVILLE, May 18, 1858.<sup>1</sup>

In the pastoral address the conference presents for the purpose of justifying this action the following views: After the Southern churches had been organized in one denomination the Discipline still contained the rule and the section on slavery. The section was anomalous. While denouncing slavery as an evil, and pledging the

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference of \_\_\_\_\_,” p. \_\_\_\_\_.

church to its extirpation, it provided by statute for its allowance and perpetuation. Four years before the conference had abolished the section, but the rule still remained. Its removal they believed to be demanded by loyalty as citizens under the Constitution of the country, by consistency, by fidelity to the people whom they served and the institutions in which they lived; that the removal would place them upon a Scriptural basis; they could then carry out the ideas taught by St. Paul; they could circulate the Discipline without note or comment; they would then have surrendered to Cæsar the things which are his, and could hold themselves "debtors to the wise and the unwise, the bond and the free," and, unchallenged by the jealous and distrustful, "preach Christ alike to the master and the servant, secure in the confidence and affection of the one and the other."<sup>1</sup>

The Committee on Episcopacy reported serious complaints against Bishop Early, to which he replied at length. The charges were that "in the conference and stationing-room he had been too arbitrary and discourteous to some of the preachers." Resolutions were offered, recognizing his advanced age and increasing infirmities, approving his character, and releasing him from the duties of episcopal visitation. The conference finally passed these resolutions: "That, after a patient consideration of the complaints made against Bishop Early, the conference deeply regrets that there is any ground for said complaints; nevertheless, inasmuch as the complaints do not impeach the purity of his character nor his fealty to the church, but refer to the manner of his administration; and, further, in view of the explanation made by Bishop Early, and his expressed willingness to guard against giving offense in the future on the point above referred to, his character do now pass.

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1858," pp. 585, 586.

Also, that in the action had in the case of Bishop Early this conference does explicitly and emphatically disavow any intention of interfering with the episcopal prerogative in fixing the appointments of the preachers."

The publishing department of church work was thoroughly organized on the report of a committee of which J. B. McFerrin was chairman. The fees which the counsel received for prosecuting the claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as stated in the report of the commissioners, are interesting as indicating what at that time was demanded by eminent counsel. Daniel Lord and Reverdy Johnson were paid \$2500 each. This was for services before the Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York. The latter, for arguing the Ohio case, demanded \$4000, which he subsequently reduced to \$3000; but the chairman of the board of commissioners would not consent to this, and Mr. Johnson avowed his purpose to begin a suit.<sup>1</sup>

McFerrin was elected agent of the Book Concern, H. N. McTyeire taking the place which this election made vacant as editor of the Nashville "Christian Advocate." O. P. Fitzgerald was elected editor of the "Pacific Methodist." The increase in membership was greater even than that which gladdened the preceding conference, for it amounted to 95,862. When the conference balloted upon the place of holding the next session, New Orleans received a majority of votes; April 1, 1862, was chosen as the time.<sup>2</sup> The church continued to increase, having a membership in 1860 of 757,209, of which 207,776 were

<sup>1</sup> For the consultations, briefs, preparation for, and argument before the United States Circuit Court the Methodist Book Concern paid Rufus Choate and George Wood each \$2000, and E. L. Fancher \$1000; the last-named was paid an additional sum for subsequently arguing against an appeal as to the sum taken by Daniel Lord for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, from the decision of a Master.

<sup>2</sup> "Journal," p. 548.

colored. The number of traveling preachers was 2784, including those upon trial.<sup>1</sup>

The Civil War began within a few months, in which twenty-one hundred and ten battles were fought, the large majority occurring upon territory covered by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.<sup>2</sup> McTyeire says that "the distresses of war were intensified by the impoverishment and confusion which follow invasion and defeat. . . . Hundreds of churches were burned, or dismantled by use as hospitals, warehouses, or stables. College endowments were swept away and the buildings abandoned. Annual Conferences met irregularly or in fragments; the General Conference of 1862 was not held, and the whole order of the itinerancy was interrupted; the church press was silent, and many of the most liberal supporters of the church and its institutions were reduced to abject want."<sup>3</sup> The publishing-house had been seized by military officers and put into commission as a United States printing-office. The missionaries in China had been cut off from communication with the home board. McTyeire pays a tribute of gratitude to the treasurer of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for indorsing the drafts in the hands of the home board, saying that "whatever mitigates the logic of war is a charity to the human race."<sup>4</sup>

By 1866 the number of traveling preachers was reduced to 2488, and colored members to 48,742, and the Indian Mission work, that in 1860 had 4160 members, was reduced to 701.<sup>5</sup> The Indian Territory was overrun by the troops, and, many of the chiefs having enlisted under the Confederate banner, their tribes and families were dis-

<sup>1</sup> "Year-book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for 1896."

<sup>2</sup> Official reports of Surgeon-General Barnes.

<sup>3</sup> McTyeire's "History of Methodism," p. 664.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 665.

<sup>5</sup> "Year-book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for 1896."

persed. In 1865, after the close of the war, the bishops issued an address declaring that, "whatever banner had fallen or been folded up, that of Southern Methodism was yet unfurled; whatever cause had been lost, that of Southern Methodism survived."<sup>1</sup>

The General Conference of 1866, which had been appointed to meet in New Orleans, April, 1862, convened there April 4, 1866. The first official action of importance was the passage of this resolution: "That the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, fully approves the action of Bishop Early in admitting the Baltimore Annual Conference into the fellowship of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and that we cordially receive and recognize the delegates elected from that conference as members of the General Conference of said church, now in session in the city of New Orleans."

The bishops officially reported that they were compelled in the early part of the war to confine their episcopal visitations to the territory east of the Mississippi River, though Bishop Kavanaugh, who lived within the Federal lines, visited the Missouri, the St. Louis, and the two Kentucky conferences, also the California. They report that, with few exceptions, the Annual Conferences had been held; that, however, extraordinary exigencies required them to depart from the strict letter of the law; that the missionary work had been well-nigh ruined; that the reorganization of the Book Concern was necessary; and that the condition of the periodical press was such that it would be wiser to unite conferences in the publication of a smaller number, which could thus be better supported and further improved.

The conference, in harmony with the precedents of early

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire, p. 666.



Episcopal Methodism, resolved itself into a committee of the whole, but placed a bishop in the chair. Bishop Andrew, at his own request, was released from active participation in the official responsibilities of the episcopal office.

On motion of Holland N. McTyeire, it was resolved, on an aye and no vote of ninety-five to fifty, "That it is the sense of this General Conference that lay representation be introduced into the Annual and General Conferences." A committee of one from each delegation was appointed to prepare and report plan. William M. Wightman, Enoch M. Marvin, David S. Doggett, and Holland N. McTyeire were elected bishops, A. H. Redford, book-agent, I. G. John, editor of the Texas, W. C. Johnson of the Memphis and the Arkansas, D. R. McAnally of the St. Louis, J. E. Cobb of the Arkansas, E. H. Myers of the "Southern Christian Advocate," and O. P. Fitzgerald of the "Christian Spectator."

Attempts were made to change the name of the church, "Episcopal Methodist" being proposed by J. B. McFerrin and C. F. Deems, and "Methodist" by E. H. Myers. A motion to change the name of the church with an unfilled blank passed. It was decided that no change should be made. Among the names voted for were "Methodist Church," "Methodist Episcopal Church in America," "Southern Methodist Episcopal Church," "Southern Methodist Church," "Wesleyan Episcopal Church," "Episcopal Methodist Church," "Methodist Episcopal Church," "Methodist Church, South." At one stage the "Methodist Church" had one hundred and eleven votes to twenty-one. The "Episcopal Methodist Church" was adopted by ayes and noes of eighty-six to thirty-eight.

The conference adopted the report of the committee on changes of economy, and removed all time limit relating

to a term of service in any one appointment. It was ordered by a two-thirds vote of the conference that "the style and title of the church should be the 'Episcopal Methodist Church,' provided that three fourths of the members of the Annual Conferences present and voting shall have concurred in the aforesaid ordinance." The conference resolved, in view of the fact that the vote of the General Conference on the extension of the pastoral term was nearly equally divided, and the change proposed was one fraught with vital consequences, that the action repealing the law of limitation and leaving the term of the pastorate to the discretion of the appointing power should not take effect unless approved by a majority of the members of the Annual Conferences present and voting.

The plan of lay representation submitted to the conferences provided that four laymen, one of whom might be a local preacher, should be chosen annually as representatives to the Annual Conference from each presiding elder's district by the district stewards, or in such other manner as the Annual Conference may direct, and that they should participate in all business of the conference except such as involved ministerial character and relations. The representatives must be twenty-five years of age and have been for six preceding years members of the church.

The number of lay and clerical representatives should be equal in the General Conference, and the lay representatives were to be elected by the lay members of the Annual Conference. No conference should be denied the privilege of two lay delegates. Ministers and laymen should deliberate in one body, but on a call of one fifth of the members the lay and clerical representatives should vote separately. The resolutions submitting to the Annual Conferences the action repealing the law of limitation were reconsidered and laid on the table. It was then re-

solved, by a vote of seventy-two to forty-nine, to extend the pastoral term from two to four years.

The system of receiving candidates for church-membership upon probation was abolished; attendance upon class-meetings was made voluntary; and provision was made for meetings, once a month, of all members of the church and resident members of an Annual Conference, or on circuits at least every three months. Authority was given to these meetings to strike off the names of any who, on account of removal or other cause, had been lost sight of for twelve months, with the provision that if such appeared and claimed membership they might be restored by a vote of the meeting.

McTyeire, who at that time favored the removal of a time limit, became convinced by experience as bishop that the church escaped a very great evil by repealing the act immediately. He speaks thus: "At one time a motion was favorably entertained to remove the limit altogether, leaving the appointment for one year only, but to be repeated at the discretion of the appointing power. This, however, was reconsidered, none objecting more to the extension of discretion than the bishops. If they, for the good of the whole work, must move the preachers, the law must keep them movable."<sup>1</sup>

Four bishops were chosen: William M. Wightman, Enoch M. Marvin, David S. Doggett, and Holland N. McTyeire.

Wightman was born in Charleston, S. C., January 29, 1808. His life covered the whole period of constitutional Methodism. He had been a minister thirty years, and had been pastor, presiding elder, professor, editor, and college president.

Marvin was a descendant on his father's side from early New England settlers, and on his mother's from a

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire's "History of Methodism," p. 667.

Welsh family. He was born in Warren County, Missouri, June 12, 1823, and began to preach in 1842, a year after he was converted. Ten years were spent in mission, circuit, and station work, after which he was made presiding elder. He filled several pastorates in St. Louis and served as chaplain in the Confederate army. At the close of the war he became a pastor in Texas. He was famous for social qualities and also for genuine unction as a preacher.

Doggett was a native of Virginia and was fifty-six years old when chosen bishop. His great-grandfather was an English clergyman, who settled in that colony and during colonial times was a rector of an English church there. His parents were converted in 1792 and opened their house for Methodist preaching. He began to preach when less than twenty years of age, and speedily attained fame for eloquence and efficiency, and in 1841 was elected professor of mental and moral philosophy at Randolph Macon College. From 1851 to 1858 he was editor of the "Southern Methodist Quarterly Review," and during six of the years regularly appointed pastor of one of the largest city stations. After a term of service as presiding elder he became pastor in Richmond.

McTyeire, a South Carolinian, was born July 28, 1824. He studied at Randolph Macon College; was admitted on trial in the Virginia Conference, November, 1845; preached in Alabama and Louisiana; and had been professor of mathematics and ancient languages in his alma mater, editor of the New Orleans "Christian Advocate" and of the "Christian Advocate" at Nashville, Tenn.

On the 6th of March, 1867, Bishop Soule died at Nashville, Tenn. He had been a minister more than sixty-seven, and a bishop forty-three, years. When the General Conference of 1870 convened in Memphis, Tenn., his colleagues paid him a fitting tribute.

Bishops Janes and Harris, representing the Methodist Episcopal Church, appeared and made a statement based on action of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of union. There were certain complications in the resolutions of the General Conference, which they represented, which led the conference to the conclusion that the original purpose did not contemplate propositions of union with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that they were not clothed with power to treat for union. The conference resolved, "That it is the judgment of this conference that the true interests of the church of Christ require and demand the maintenance of our separate organization." It also referred to the action of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its last annual meeting, which defined the position of the church and approved the same.

"Great courtesy," says the "Journal of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," "marked the spirit and conduct of the ambassadors from the Methodist Episcopal Church;" and the account of their reception shows that it was fully reciprocated. The complimentary resolutions close thus: "That we tender to the Rev. Bishop E. S. Janes and the Rev. W. L. Harris, members of the commission now with us, our high regards as brethren beloved in the Lord, and express our desire that the day may soon come when proper Christian sentiments and fraternal relations between the two great branches of Northern and Southern Methodism shall be permanently established."

Another attempt was made to change the name of the church. After discussion the proposition was laid on the table among the unfinished business. Atticus G. Haygood was elected Sunday-school secretary, and John

Christian Keener bishop. He was born in Baltimore, February 7, 1819, prepared himself for college at Wilbraham, Mass., and was graduated as a member of the first regular class in Wesleyan University in 1835. In 1843 he joined the Alabama Conference on trial and three years later was sent to New Orleans. There he remained twenty years, filling three pastorates and the presiding eldership of the New Orleans district. From 1866 until his election as bishop he edited the New Orleans "Christian Advocate."

The Conference of 1874 convened in Louisville, Ky. Bishop Andrew died March 2, 1871, and Bishop Early November 5, 1873. The increase of the church had been marvelous. Notwithstanding 60,000 members had withdrawn to form the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, there was a gain of 126,299. The bishops also reported "wonderful progress in church-building both as to the number of houses, style of architecture, and accommodations for comfort at all seasons." They deplored the fact that the great body of the people persisted in believing that the General Conference of 1866 abolished class-meetings, not only as a test of membership, but as a Methodist institution, and called for action to destroy the latter impression. The fraternal delegates from the Methodist Episcopal Church were Albert S. Hunt, Charles H. Fowler, and General Clinton B. Fisk. The "Journal" records that their addresses were characterized by "excellent taste, great ability, and warm fraternal sentiments."

Arrangements were made for the Cape May Commission.<sup>1</sup> An official address was received from the British Wesleyan Conference, signed by George C. Perks, the president, and Gervase Smith, the secretary. It referred to the fact that hitherto the body had not sought intercommunion, assigned the existence of slavery as the cause, and

<sup>1</sup> See p. .

thanked God that it had passed away. In replying the General Conference expressed itself thus: "Being aware of the light in which the heated denunciations of sectional prejudice and misunderstood surroundings have caused us to be viewed, . . . we have calmly waited for time to soften asperities of feeling. . . . Believing that ecclesiastically we have occupied no ground which is not strictly Scriptural, or different from that occupied by the venerable founder of Methodism and the other great bodies of the Wesleyan family, we have not been able to see why your venerable body has failed to recognize us hitherto." The conference declined even to state the grounds of its former or present position, or to attempt any defense, but affirmed itself entirely willing to leave its vindication "to impartial history and calmer times," and "content to rejoice that an era of clear views has dawned."

The General Conference of 1870 had adopted, by a vote of one hundred and sixty-four to four, a proposal to change the Discipline so as to give to the bishops the power to present their objections thereto, with their reasons, in writing, in case a rule or regulation was adopted by the General Conference which in their opinion was unconstitutional. If then the General Conference should by a two-thirds vote adhere to its action, it should take the course prescribed for altering a restrictive rule, and if thus passed upon affirmatively the bishops should announce that such rule or regulation took effect from that time. These resolutions were submitted to the several Annual Conferences and were concurred in, the vote being two thousand and twenty-four yeas to nine nays, and the Discipline was changed in harmony therewith.

The Book Concern being in financial difficulties, John B. McFerrin was elected agent, the enormous debt of \$356,843 was bonded, and, aided by a committee consist-

ing of leading business men, McFerrin, at the age of seventy-one, went forth to sell the bonds and place the institution on a paying basis.

The conference recognized the magnificent gift of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, of New York, of over \$500,000 to build and endow a university under the control of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the corner-stone of which had been laid April 24, 1872.

The Conference of 1878, meeting at Atlanta, Ga., referred the question of the church name to a special committee, on whose report it resolved that the question had been finally settled by rejection, that the time for such change, if it ever existed, was past, and that there should be no further agitation of the matter. The agreement reached by the Cape May Commission, establishing formal fraternity, was approved. C. D. Foss and W. Cumback presented fraternal greetings from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and an incident of special significance was the response of Pierce, then in his ninety-fourth year. The death of Bishop Marvin, which had taken place November 26th of the preceding year, was recognized with grief, which was mingled with gladness that his life had been such that, though dead, he would speak while the church should last. The surpassing eloquence and power of George Douglas, fraternal delegate from Canada, were a delight and astonishment to the conference.

It was with great joy that the General Conference of 1882 convened at Nashville. The force of ministers had increased 247, and the membership amounted to 860,687. Contributions to foreign missions had increased \$111,438.-01, and the amount in the last showed a handsome advance upon the sum received in the preceding quadrennium. The Indian Mission had steadily grown, there being in that conference over 5000 members. The Mexican Bor-



der, the Central Mexican, the China, and the Brazil missions presented favorable indications.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, then four years old, had already justified the enthusiasm with which its organization was heralded to the church. The publishing-house, whose liabilities four years before exceeded the assets by more than \$100,000, now reported a surplus of \$50,000.

The senior bishop, Paine, in the sixty-fifth year of his ministry, besought the conference to allow him to retire from future active service. Summers, the "editor of books," who had been secretary of every General Conference except the first, when he was assistant, died during the session of the conference. H. B. Ridgaway appeared as fraternal delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Alpheus W. Wilson, Linus Parker, Atticus G. Haygood, John C. Granbery, and Robert K. Hargrove were elected bishops.

Wilson was the son of Norval Wilson, a Methodist minister of distinction, and was born in 1834. He studied medicine, but entered the ministry at nineteen and had important appointments, but, failing in health, studied and practiced law. He afterward resumed the ministry, and had been an efficient secretary of the Board of Missions for four years.

Parker, fifty-three years of age, was a native of Rome, N. Y., and had been pastor, presiding elder, and editor of the New Orleans "Christian Advocate."

Granbery was born in Norfolk, Va., December 5, 1829, and was graduated from Randolph Macon College with the first honor of the class. He was a chaplain in the Confederate army, for a time was superintendent of chaplains for the Virginia Conference, and had been seven years professor in the theological department of Vanderbilt University.

Hargrove was not a member of the body which elected him bishop. He was born September 7, 1829, was graduated from the University of Alabama, had been pastor, presiding elder, college professor, and president.

Haygood on the day after his election solemnly declined to accept the position, on the ground that he could not lay down the important work which he then had in hand,—that of president of Emory College,—whereupon the conference resolved to elect no one in his place.

O. P. Fitzgerald was elected editor of the Nashville "Christian Advocate," W. H. Harrison, book-editor, Robert A. Young, secretary of the Board of Missions, J. W. Hinton, editor of the "Quarterly Review." The editors of the other periodicals officially recognized were elected by the delegations of the conferences of which the papers were respectively the organs.

A chapter which declared drunkenness an immorality was added to the Discipline, and where members are guilty of drinking spirituous liquors (except in cases of necessity) it was ordered that the rules for dealing with imprudent or improper conduct should be applied. It was further provided that members engaged in manufacturing or selling intoxicating liquors to be used as a beverage should be proceeded against in the same manner.

Four bishops died during the next quadrennium: Paine, October 19, 1882; Kavanaugh, March 19, 1884; Pierce, September 3, 1884; and Parker, March 5, 1885.

The episcopal address to the General Conference of 1886 at Richmond, Va., made enthusiastic reference to the centennial celebration, and said there would seem to be no room for doubt that fraternity is an accomplished fact. One million three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars had been given in the Centennial Conference, mostly for local objects. The conference recognized with delight

the largest quadrennial accession since the organization of the church—130,277. Vanderbilt University already had 519 students, and maintained mathematical, biblical, law, dental, pharmaceutical, and engineering departments. The biblical department had received a bequest of \$40,000 from Mrs. Elizabeth Dickinson, of Memphis, Tenn. William H. Vanderbilt, son of the founder, had died and left so large a sum that his gifts now amounted to \$460,000.

The conference amended the chapter in the Discipline on the subject of temperance by requiring that persons who manufactured or sold intoxicating liquors as a beverage should be dealt with as in the case of immorality, and not merely as in the case of imprudent or improper conduct. It also declared that it would continue to agitate the subject of prohibition as a great moral question. John Miley represented the Methodist Episcopal Church, William Briggs the Methodist Church of Canada.

Upon the subject of divorce the following resolution was passed: "No minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, knowingly, upon due inquiry, shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has a divorced wife or husband still living; provided this inhibition shall not apply to the innocent party to a divorce granted for the Scriptural cause, or to parties once divorced seeking to be remarried."

William W. Duncan, Charles B. Galloway, Eugene R. Hendrix, and Joseph S. Key were elected bishops.

Duncan was born December 27, 1839, at Randolph Macon College, Virginia, where his father was professor of ancient languages. He was graduated from Wofford College, Spartanburg, S. C.; joined the Virginia Conference in 1859; was pastor, a portion of the time chaplain, till 1875, when he became professor of mental and moral science in his alma mater; there he remained until made

bishop, though constantly preaching and in great demand for platform addresses.

Galloway was born in Mississippi, September 15, 1849, was graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1868, and later in the year entered the conference of the same name. His success as a pastor was marked from the outset, and his eloquence in the cause of temperance and other forms of philanthropy gave him deserved popularity throughout the State; for the last four years he was editor of the New Orleans "Christian Advocate."

Hendrix was born in Fayette County, Missouri, May 17, 1847. He was graduated from Wesleyan University in 1867 and from Union Theological Seminary in 1869. After three pastorates in his native State and a journey round the world with Bishop Marvin, who visited the missions of the church, he was elected president of Central College, Fayette, Mo., and there remained till chosen bishop.

Key is a native of La Grange, Ga., where he was born July 18, 1829. He was converted in 1847, was graduated the next year from Emory College, and at once entered the Georgia Conference. He had spent eleven years in Macon as pastor and presiding elder, and thirteen in Columbus in similar capacities.

When the General Conference assembled in Atlanta in 1890 the number of preachers and members had reached 1,177,150, a gain of 186,156; corresponding addition had been made to the ministry.

Bishop McTyeire died February 15, 1889. So valuable had been his services in promoting the foundation and endowment of Vanderbilt University that the conference, after commending him in every capacity, declared that "nothing would give him more durable honor than the great service rendered in forming and directing Vanderbilt University; that it is a grand monument to the mem-

ory of its founder, and hardly less to the name of Mc-Tyeire."

Certain ministers having been speaking publicly and privately of the reformed theater and the legitimate drama, the conference, after various attempts were made to postpone the resolution, declared such expressions to be misleading and dangerous, and the more so if they emanated from a preacher of the gospel. By a rising vote they denounced the Louisiana State lottery as a national disgrace, and expressed most profound sympathy for their brethren of Louisiana, promising to aid them by all proper means to rid themselves forever of that and all other lotteries.

The committee ordered by the last General Conference to revise the hymn-book had finished its work to the satisfaction of the church. S. A. Steel, who had been fraternal delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1888, reported his reception. Frank M. Bristol and Robert E. Pattison, fraternal messengers from the Methodist Episcopal Church, were heard, and this resolution was passed: "The conference recognizes in their words that we have common antagonisms to overcome, and in their spirit that we are all looking for victory to the same source of power." This characterization included also the addresses of the fraternal delegates from the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Great Britain and Ireland.

The conference resolved that it would deplore "organic union of all Protestant churches as an evil which would intensify the differences sought to be removed, and clog for centuries the wheels of progress in Christian thought and work," and respectfully declined "to appoint a commission to meet a similar commission appointed by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the purposes indicated in their declaration."

Atticus G. Haygood and Oscar P. Fitzgerald were elected bishops. Haygood was born at Watkinsonville, Ga., November 19, 1839; was graduated from Emory College, Georgia, in 1856, licensed in his senior year to preach, and joined the Georgia Conference. After service in the pastorate and presiding eldership, in which he manifested superior executive ability, he was elected in 1870 editor of Sunday-school books, and in 1876 president of his alma mater, a part of the time editing the "Wesleyan Advocate" at Macon, Ga. Declining the episcopacy, to which he was elected in 1882, he became agent of the Slater Fund, a trust "to be administered in no partisan, sectional, or sectarian spirit, but in the interest of a generous patriotism and enlightened Christian faith." To do this he resigned his presidency. He became celebrated as an author of progressive ideas, his most important work being "Our Brother in Black."

Fitzgerald is a North Carolinian of Caswell County, where he was born August 24, 1829. After an academy education he took up journalism, next taught school, and then went upon the staff of the Richmond "Examiner." From being "sick nigh unto death" he arose a changed man, entered upon a religious life, became a minister, and went to California, where he was successively pastor, college agent, editor of the "Pacific Methodist" and the "Christian Spectator," and State superintendent of public instruction. His last function was that of editor of the Nashville "Christian Advocate."

A proposal was brought forward to make the bishops *ex officio* members of the General Conference. The Committee on Episcopacy, to which it was referred, did not concur in the recommendation, on the ground that the bishops were already *ex officio* presiding officers in General and Annual Conferences, and also endowed with a veto

power; that membership in the conferences would involve legislative prerogatives; and that to invest those with such membership, who might veto measures contrary to those which they might fail to carry, "would be a backward movement, incompatible with sound maxims and principles of government."

Preparations were made for the coming Ecumenical Conference. An exalted but merited tribute was paid to the memory of John B. McFerrin, whose services had not been surpassed in the history of the church. Discharging with rare success the ordinary obligations of the ministry, he was equally efficient as college agent, missionary secretary, editor, and book-agent, and was constantly called upon by the church to meet alarming emergencies. The report, which was adopted unanimously, speaks of him as "the great commoner of Southern Methodism."

The Conference of 1894 assembled in Memphis, Tenn. The membership, including 5487 traveling preachers, amounted to 1,345,210. The bishops deplored the multiplication of evangelists, and noted the fact that "many communities are restless unless they have weeks of evangelistic meetings yearly or once in two years, and the pastors who refuse to enter into such an arrangement are subjected to sharp criticism." They predicted "a condition in which this state of things may sink pastors into mere officers of garrisons to look after the walls, stores, and daily drill until the arrival of evangelists to inspire courage and enthusiasm and to plan and lead an active campaign."

The liberality was commended of Robert A. Barnes, of St. Louis, who, after endowing two chairs in the Central College and giving \$27,000 to the St. Louis Methodist Orphans' Home, bequeathed \$1,100,000 for the erection and maintenance of a hospital under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Bishop Galloway gave an account of his fraternal mission to the Wesleyan and other Methodist bodies of the United Kingdom. Various fraternal delegates delivered their messages, John F. Goucher and Henry Wade Rogers, president of the Northwestern University, representing the Methodist Episcopal Church. John J. Tigert gave an account of his services in a similar capacity at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Omaha, stating that he was received with all honor as the messenger of the church, and presenting the fraternal resolution passed by that body.

A unique event was the veto of the bishops of a proposed paragraph of the Discipline, numbered 260, dealing with a part of the plan of lay representation which had been incorporated with the constitution and therefore could not be altered by a vote of the conference. The point to which the exception was taken was that a committee of trial should be chosen indiscriminately by lot from a body composed of laymen and ministers, to try the character and relations of ministers only. It was ruled, on a point of order, that the veto touched but one point of the law.

E. E. Hoss was continued in the "Christian Advocate" of Nashville, to which he had been elected when Fitzgerald became bishop. J. J. Tigert was chosen editor of books and also of the "Southern Quarterly Review."

Remarkable differences besides those elsewhere mentioned exist between the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and those of other Methodist Churches in America.

When a special session of the General Conference is called, "it shall be constituted of the delegates elected to the preceding General Conference, except when an Annual Conference shall prefer to have a new election." Again, "the bishops shall have authority, when they



judge it necessary, to change the place appointed for the meeting of the General Conference." A majority of the representatives suffices to constitute a quorum. The supernumerary and superannuated relations cannot be granted, except on the recommendation of a committee on conference relations, consisting of not less than seven members; but should the committee report adversely, the conference may, by a vote of not less than three fourths of the members present, grant the application.

A discriminating provision has been added to the regulations concerning temperance and the liquor traffic. It is in these words: "This paragraph [which forbids members from doing a variety of things connected with property on which liquors are sold, becoming bondsmen for the dealers, issuing licenses] shall not apply to persons who are acting under instructions or decrees of any court, or who are acting as officers of the law."

In addition to the territory represented in the convention which organized the church, it now has conferences in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, California, Montana, New Mexico, Kansas, and Nebraska.

The oldest foreign mission is that in China, begun in 1848 and organized as a conference in 1886. There are 13 foreign and 13 native ministers, a membership of 493 natives and 24 foreigners, and in 1894 there were 503 probationers. Two colleges are sustained, also hospitals and other adjuncts of effective missionary work. The Brazil Mission Conference was begun in 1874 and was organized as a conference in 1886. There are 14 ministers, of whom 3 are on trial, and in 1894 there were 10,987 members. During the year 1894 there were 280 persons baptized, of whom 187 were adults.

The missions in Mexico were established twenty-three years ago and are flourishing. They are divided into the

Mexican Border Mission, the Northwest Mexican, and the Central Mexican Mission conferences. Besides the republic of Mexico, the Mexican populations in the United States are included in these conferences according to proximity.

The Japan Mission, opened in 1886, has been very prosperous. The conference has 13 members, 18 local preachers are employed, and there are 600 communicants. The Indian Mission Conference contains 17,118 members and is rapidly increasing.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society distributes its efforts and resources through four mission fields, and appropriated for the year 1895-96, \$83,225. The Church Extension Society, organized in 1882, collected and disbursed \$647,105.46 in thirteen years. It has a permanent loan fund amounting to more than \$100,000, and the churches helped by it number 3009.

The Woman's Parsonage and Home Mission Society has a membership of above 12,000, and in ten years has aided 784 parsonages; at the present time it supports two day and six industrial schools and eight city missionaries. Its receipts have averaged more than \$10,000 per annum.

One of the beneficent institutions of the church is the Scarritt Bible and Training-school, situated at Kansas City, Mo., founded by the liberality of the Rev. Nathan Scarritt, of that place. Though of recent origin, its students are already distributed in China, Siam, Brazil, and Japan. The Book Concern has a capital of nearly \$700,000. The Board of Education is but two years old; its work so far has been preparatory. The registry contains the names and locations of ninety-three institutions under the patronage of the church; no State in the South is without one or more. Paine Institute has property amounting to more than \$75,000. The corresponding secretary of the Board of

Education makes strenuous appeals to the church to sustain the institute, as it is so rich in opportunity as "to be wholly unable to meet the demands made upon it, and since it is the visible answer of the church to the question, 'What have you done for the education of your former slaves?'"

An event which caused the denomination great sorrow was the premature death of Bishop Haygood, January 19, 1896, who, by all human methods of computation, seemed scarcely to have reached the maturity of his extraordinary powers. In its bereavement American Christianity, and especially all progressive philanthropists, sympathized.

The rate of increase of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for some years has surpassed that of any other large Protestant body. Its leaders, lay and clerical, are arousing its constituency to the necessity of suitably endowing its numerous institutions, and the spirit of the communion is united and hopeful.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### PROPAGANDISM, CULTURE, AND PHILANTHROPY IN THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

IN its first period Methodism relied wholly upon the circuit system for expansion and growth; stations were regarded with disfavor; but with the increase of particular societies in numbers, financial resources, and independence, the multiplication of stations was inevitable, and the distance between them in the United States tended to prevent the continuance of a modified circuit system, which still predominates in England. Gradually the ancient plan has passed away in many sections, and is general only on the frontiers and in regions wholly agricultural. Hence home missions became necessary; but the circumstances attending the origin of the Missionary Society, and the relation to the Annual Conferences of all work of which the pastors are the centers, led to devolving on a single society the care of both the foreign and the home mission work. When the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church indorsed the Missionary Society in the session of 1820, it said, "Methodism itself is a missionary system. Yield the missionary spirit and you yield the very life-blood of the cause."

Charles Pitman, of New Jersey, the successor of Bangs, for eight years inspired the church with enthusiasm by his sermons and addresses. The career of Durbin, his successor, covered a period of twenty-six years, and when

he retired the annual report said: "The inspiration of his soul and the peculiarly methodical character of his mind were stamped indelibly upon its [the Missionary Society] every part." He saw the annual income increased from \$100,000 to more than \$600,000, and the appropriation to foreign missions from \$37,300 to \$300,000.

The first foreign mission was established in Africa in 1835, and the second in South America five years later. When Durbin took charge there were less than a thousand members in Africa; the work in South America had not been prosperous, though its spiritual fruits are discernible in the existing organizations; the mission to China had just been opened in Foo-chow, and had not more than twenty-five members. At the time of his retirement there were two thousand members in the Foo-chow mission alone, and missions had been established in central and north China, in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland, and in these countries had attained a membership of about twenty-two thousand. The mission in north India had reached twenty-five hundred; one in south India had been started; that in Italy was three years old; the same year was founded one in Japan, and, the year before, William Butler had raised the banner of Methodism in Mexico. Durbin was ably assisted during his entire service as secretary, notably by William L. Harris, for twelve years.

The society had been in existence for nine years before its annual receipts amounted to more than \$10,000, and three years later they fell below that amount. The treasurer's report in 1836 showed an advance of more than sixty per cent. over the preceding year, but in the panic of 1837 the annual income dropped back four and a half per cent. The year before the bisection of the church it had reached \$144,770.80; it gained \$2000 in

1844, but fell the next year to \$94,562, and continued to decline until 1847, when the lowest point, \$78,932, was reached. The panic of 1857-58 caused a loss, and before the receipts had ceased to decline on this account the early years of the Civil War occasioned a further decrease; but 1863 showed a gain over the previous year of more than \$150,000. From 1865 to 1872 the annual inflow fluctuated between \$600,000 and \$700,000, in the latter year lacking but \$7500 of \$700,000. The panic of 1873 precipitated a period of decrease lasting six years, the receipts of 1879 being \$559,371.14. After this there was a steady rise until 1884, when Charles C. McCabe became a secretary. Finding that during the preceding quadrennium the yearly receipts had been increased over \$200,000, he raised the cry of, "A million for missions," and in two years, despite considerable skepticism, transformed prophecy into history.

In the beginning all the money appropriated in this country was distributed through the various Annual Conferences; but most of the older conferences have relinquished their claims, and the funds spent in the United States are now devoted to the assistance of conferences in which there is a large proportion of frontier work, and to the support of domestic missions, which include the American Indians, the Welsh, French, German, Scandinavian, Chinese, Japanese, Bohemian, Italian, and Portuguese races, speaking their native tongues, and English-speaking mission conferences.

The earliest missionaries to China were Judson Dwight Collins, Moses C. White, and Robert S. Maclay. The mission in India was founded by William Butler. Maclay, whose administration in China had demonstrated his pre-eminent fitness for responsibility, founded the mission in Japan in 1873; he also was the first Christian missionary

to enter the open door of Korea, the "hermit nation." Having sailed from Nagasaki, Japan, he arrived at Chumulpo on the 23d of June, 1884, and went at once to the capital. But the first missionary duly appointed to Korea was the Rev. William Benton Scranton, M.D., an alumnus of Yale College and of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York.

The mission in Bulgaria was founded in 1857 by Albert L. Long<sup>1</sup> and Wesley Prettyman. The mission to Norway began in New York under the labors of Olof Gustav Hedstrom, pastor of the Bethel Ship, "John Wesley," whose converts bore the news of their conversion to Norway. One of them, O. P. Petersen, is the real founder of the Methodist mission in that country. John P. Larsson, a Swede, a Bethel Ship convert, originated the Swedish mission, and was the first missionary of the society therein. C. Willerup, assisted by Larsson, was the founder of the mission to Denmark, his native land.

The German missions in America, founded by William Nast, were widely distributed and very prosperous as early as 1844, when he was authorized to visit Germany with a view of founding a mission there. Ludwig S. Jacoby was appointed in 1849 to Germany, and preached his first sermon in December of that year in a small place about twenty miles from Berlin. Five months later the first Quarterly Conference was held in Bremen, which he considered the birthday of the mission.

Two days after its formation the Missionary Society formally resolved that "the females attached to the Methodist congregations be invited to form an auxiliary society." The Women's Union Missionary Society for Heathen Lands was founded in 1860, and in 1868 the Women's Board of

<sup>1</sup> Now professor in Robert College, Constantinople, and one of the translators of the Bible into the Bulgarian tongue.

Missions, auxiliary to the American Board. In April E. W. Parker and wife, of India, Mrs. William Butler, wife of the founder of the India mission, and William F. Warren and wife, who had returned from service in the mission in Germany, conferred, with the result that Parker wrote to the Missionary Society with reference to a proposed missionary organization of Methodist women in Boston. Secretary Durbin held a conference with these ladies on the 7th of May, 1869, and after some correspondence concerning possible difficulties the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized. It was to confine its labors to sending female missionaries to women in foreign mission fields of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and its work was to be subject to the approval of the parent society, collisions at home to be avoided by taking no collections or subscriptions in any promiscuous assembly, and they were to raise their moneys in such a way as would not interfere with the income of the parent society.

This society prospered greatly, for the work and its supervision commanded public confidence. It now has nearly two hundred thousand members, and publishes the "Woman's Missionary Friend" and the "Children's Missionary Friend," each having a large circulation. The former has been so well managed financially that it has contributed more than \$30,000 toward the publication of miscellaneous literature.

At the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society it appeared that it had sent 235 missionaries to the foreign field, of whom 34 were medical graduates; it was then supporting 146, of whom 118 were in the field and 28 at home with impaired health, and maintaining 383 day-schools and 41 boarding-schools, 10 orphanages and 8 training-schools, besides 3 homes for homeless women, and 13 hospitals and dispen-



saries. The society raised and disbursed previous to the close of 1895, \$3,740,910.

The Woman's Home Missionary Society dates from June 8, 1880, and was the result of the approval by the General Conference of that year of work which had been done, auxiliary to the Freedmen's Aid Society, by ladies who had coöperated with it. The society attributes its origin to Bishop Wiley. Its success is due in large part to the character, influence, and judgment of its presidents.

It has erected cottage homes in connection with the colleges of the Freedmen's Aid Society, provided for the work in Utah a building at a cost of \$6000, and nine other buildings, besides maintaining mission schools in twelve places, and establishing the Lucy Webb Hayes Training-school for deaconesses in Washington, D. C., in honor of Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes, its president during the first nine years of its history. It also established missions of importance and deaconesses' homes, devoting much of its attention and means to the Indians, and reinforcing the efforts of pastors to maintain missions in regions of the country where the resources of the people have been temporarily cut off. Mrs. Hayes was succeeded by Mrs. John Davis, of Cincinnati, and she by Mrs. Clinton B. Fisk, of New York.

The missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church in foreign lands, with two or at most but three exceptions, are prospering beyond any expectation which was reasonable when they were established. An encyclopedia would be required to describe them worthily geographically, ethnologically, ecclesiastically, and as fields for the display of the most heroic qualities of human nature, fortified and stimulated by divine grace.

At the present time the funds of the parent society are divided between home and foreign work in the ratio of

forty-five per cent. to the home and fifty-five per cent. to the foreign.

Besides numerous schools of different grades, the Methodist Episcopal Church sustains seventy-six regularly established academies, colleges, and universities in foreign lands, among which are the Anglo-Chinese College and Theological Seminary at Foo-chow, the Peking University, the Bareilly Theological Seminary, the Lucknow Woman's College, the Anglo-Japanese College, the Copenhagen Theological Institute, the Martin Institute at Frankfort, Germany (named in honor of John T. Martin, a layman of Brooklyn, N. Y., who gave for it \$25,000 as a part of his contribution to the centennial of American Methodism), and the Theological School in Rome, Italy.

The receipts of the society from the beginning to the close of 1895 were \$30,795,462.83, of which \$26,106,776.19 had been contributed by the people, \$1,686,222.36 were the proceeds of bequests, and the remainder is classed in the reports under sundries, except \$253,232.50, given by the American Bible Society at different periods, chiefly in copies of the Scriptures for missionary work. \$12,533,767 have been spent in foreign lands.

This vast property, with its thousands of schools, its colleges and theological seminaries, could not have been achieved without the coöperation of the laity, who have contributed large sums for the purchase of property, the erection of churches, the support of special enterprises, and for the endowment of schools, and bequeathed in the aggregate vast amounts to the societies.

Among the most noteworthy of these laymen was Harold Dollner, a Dane, originally intended for the Lutheran ministry, who, filled with the spirit of maritime adventure so prevalent in his country, shipped as a sailor, and after many hardships landed in Boston, Mass., where he wan-

dered into the Seamen's Bethel, and was converted under the influence and by the instructions of Father Taylor, together with the aid of Danes, who were witnesses to him of the power of God unto salvation. He went into business in New York, accumulated a fortune, and was for many years consul-general of Denmark to the United States, and frequently acting minister. For a long time he gave \$1000 per annum toward missions, and was a manager of the Missionary Society, which he made his residuary legatee, the society receiving from his estate about \$100,000. The large church in Copenhagen was chiefly built by his contributions, and he made frequent visits to Denmark, his presence always inspiring the missionaries to greater zeal.

The work of the Church Extension Society is confined to the United States, and it is impossible to overestimate the value of the results which have been achieved by it in coöperation with the preaching of the gospel and other spiritual agencies. It aids in the erection of churches by direct gifts, and by loans which are secured by mortgages, the collection of which, when necessary, is enforced in the courts.

The society for more than a quarter of a century has had the benefit of the cumulative experience and firm adherence to its rules of the senior corresponding secretary. And equally fortunate was it for him and for the church that he should be reinforced by the magic of McCabe, and that the latter, when transferred to the Missionary Society, should be succeeded by William A. Spencer, who brought equal endurance and zeal to the work. It has, like the Missionary Society, received the coöperation of the bishops, who are *ex officio* members, and of the most efficient ministers and laymen who have constituted its board of managers.

During the history of the society \$3,621,150.29 have

been expended on the general fund. The capital of the loan fund at present is \$988,598.87. Since the establishment of that fund \$1,025,746.87 loaned have been returned. By these sums 10,083 churches have been aided. Without this assistance many societies would have disintegrated, while by far the majority of those owning churches would be meagerly accommodated.

The Book Concern, whose beginning was so humble, has become a power of high importance as a means of propagandism. The sales of the Eastern house in the last four years amounted to \$4,000,000, and its assets are valued at \$2,536,065.62. Those of the Western house were also about \$4,000,000, and its assets reach \$1,500,000. During the last four years \$505,000 of the produce of both Concerns were distributed to the conferences for the support of worn-out preachers and of the widows and orphans of ministers.

The vast circulation of its books and periodicals, and of books, published by other houses, which are found desirable for Sunday-school and other libraries, are stimulants to denominational and individual Christian activity, and guides to those who desire to devote with the least waste their gifts and efforts to the enterprises of the church. The profits promote the interests of every other cause which appeals to the people for special gifts, by relieving the church of the necessity of raising the amount that would be demanded for those to whom these profits are applied; and it is aimed to do this without either making prices so high as to be an undesirable tax upon Christian literature, or to render the people indifferent to the needs of those who have consumed their strength in the service of the church.

One of the advantages of the system is that in frontier or poverty-stricken regions papers and periodicals and centers for the circulation of necessary books can be es-

tablished and maintained from the general fund, until the locality so prospers as to become self-supporting; in this way some of the most important of the church periodicals were made possible. So obvious are the benefits of such an institution that nearly every branch of Methodism in the world maintains something similar, those in this country being modeled upon that originally established by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The influence of the official press of the Methodist Episcopal Church has undoubtedly contributed greatly to the permanence and harmonious working of its complex system. It has defended the doctrines and usages of the church from attack, explained misunderstandings, and purveyed to the ministry and laity official information.

A large semi-official and independent press has gradually grown up, the influence of which must be considered in every estimate of the forces of Methodism. Some are devoted to specialties, such as the promotion of the higher life; the object of others is to supplement the official press with greater fullness of detail concerning the localities in which they exist.

"Zion's Herald" has been edited by men of such distinguished ability and services that the names of several of them have been necessarily mentioned. Under B. K. Pierce, who held the position for sixteen years, it was one of the best family papers in the country. Under Charles Parkhurst, who has edited it for eight years, its circulation has increased and it has become widely known. Its profits are given to those conferences whose territory is entirely in New England, for the support of worn-out ministers, their widows and orphans.

The "Michigan Christian Advocate," founded by a stock company of Methodist ministers and laymen, and published in Detroit, has been very successful, especially since it has

been edited by James H. Potts, who was associate editor for some years with the late J. M. Arnold. Its circulation is large, and after paying a certain stipulated interest to the owners of the stock on the capital invested, it gives its profits to the Michigan and Detroit conferences for the same purpose as that to which are applied the proceeds of the Book Concern.

Authors, many of wide repute, have been numerous in all branches of Methodism, naturally more so in the largest numerically. Their doctrinal, homiletical, educational, philanthropic, historical, and practical works have been useful. And when they have dealt worthily with themes not directly connected with church work the reputation gained by them has accrued to the credit of their ecclesiastical relations.

The Sunday-school Union is a valuable means both of propagandism and philanthropy, by assisting in the establishment of Sunday-schools and by making donations of Christian literature and books for study; and by it are aided the Sunday-schools in foreign missions as well as in the United States. The tract department has operated in the foreign field since 1854, and grants have been made to every foreign mission of the church, and also to France. Tracts are systematically distributed to immigrants, to soldiers and sailors, and in hospitals, prisons, and asylums, also to pastors for their regular work. During the year 1895, 2575 churches have applied for and received such aid. More than a million copies, averaging ten pages each, were printed in English at New York, and two hundred thousand in German at Cincinnati. It publishes several useful and widely circulated periodicals.

The Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society has expended more than \$4,000,000 in establishing and supporting institutions of learning in the South. The

number of schools among the people of African descent is 22, of which 10 have a collegiate grade, 1 is a theological seminary, and 11 are academies. Among these the Gammon Theological Seminary at Atlanta has risen to the first rank, as has also Clark University, of which it was originally a department. The institutions of a collegiate grade are located in the midst of a large colored population. The colleges enroll at present 3139 students, the academies 1622, and the theological seminary 84.

Of the schools maintained for whites, 3 are colleges, with 1559 students; the 19 academies contain 2021 students. Of the 8425 in the Southern institutions under the control of this society, 219 are preparing for the ministry, 225 studying medicine, 12 dentistry, 12 pharmacy. In the manual-training and trade schools are 1549 colored students. Valuable as are these institutions as a means of denominational propagandism, both patriotism and philanthropy are conspicuously illustrated by them.

The Board of Education was invested by the General Conference of 1892 with a very limited supervisory care of the higher institutions, in that it was authorized to recognize in its official list as colleges only such as meet the requirements formulated by the University Senate, which regulate the studies that must have been completed in a satisfactory manner by candidates for admission to college to study with reference to securing the degree of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Philosophy, or Bachelor of Letters. In order to be recognized as a college of the Methodist Episcopal Church, an institution must present and require the mastery of courses of instruction sufficient to occupy candidates for the degree fifteen hours or more a week for at least thirty-two weeks of four successive years. The curriculum must be of a high grade, and two thirds of the instructors must be

alumni of colleges. There must be one course covering the historical and literary study of the Bible in the vernacular; some other particulars are added, but the other courses are left to the discretion of the governing bodies of the colleges themselves.

The funds of this society are derived from interest on amounts given in the centennial year, and by collections upon Children's day, which the General Conference has ordered to be observed throughout the church. Loans are made to students on a condition that the beneficiaries be members of a Methodist Episcopal church and ordinarily attending. The number of students aided up to 1896 is 6595; 923 of these were preparing for the ministry, 145 for missionary work, 278 for teaching. The average amount loaned to each beneficiary is \$91.54.

To secure a loan the applicant must be recommended by the Quarterly Conference of the church to which he belongs, and make application to the president or principal of the institution which he attends. A note is required, which the signer is legally and morally bound to pay as soon as able. The General Conference authorizes the board to cancel a loan in whole or in part on account of protracted ill health, or for five years' actual missionary service. The amount loaned in the twenty-two years is \$603,579.59, and only \$50,774.16 have been returned. This proportion suggests serious problems, to which the attention of the church was directed in 1896. In discussion attention was directed to the facts that during the first six years of the society's history notes were not required, and that until quite recently an erroneous impression prevailed that when one entered the missionary service his notes were immediately canceled; that a large majority receiving loans have gone into fields where they have received but a pittance, and with the increase of fam-



ilies have found it difficult to lay aside anything for paying their debts; that a considerable number of accounts have been canceled by death, ill health, misfortune, and missionary service; that eighty-six per cent. of the whole amount has been loaned within the last twelve years, sixty-eight per cent. during the last eight, and forty-four per cent. during the last four years, and that, accordingly, in a majority of cases payments could not be expected for some years to come. From the last consideration it is argued that larger returns must be expected.

The subject, however, is one that has given perplexity to other religious denominations; for the advantage of such assistance would be much discounted if with education so obtained there was a diminution of the sense of honor.

The educational institutions of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the past thirty years have received many gifts. Besides those elsewhere mentioned, Wesleyan University received a noble hall erected at the cost of Orange Judd, one of its alumni, the value of which, with his other gifts, amounted to \$100,000. This institution, under the presidency of Joseph Cummings, was distinguished by an extraordinary improvement in grounds and buildings; under that of Cyrus Foss by a steady growth in the elements which attract public respect and confidence; under that of John W. Beach by contributions from George I. Seney, amounting to \$350,000. Under Bradford P. Raymond there has been an increase in students and facilities for instruction, the latter to a considerable degree made possible by the bestowment of \$300,000 by Daniel Ayres, M.D., \$200,000 of which was presented in one sum, for the promotion of science, particularly in the department of biology, and by a bequest of \$100,000 by D. B. Fayerweather, a merchant of New York.

Drew Theological Seminary has met a need so generally felt that, although deprived of its first president by death, and of its second and third by their election to the episcopacy, under the direction of Henry A. Buttz, who, after having been connected with the institution as a professor from its foundation, has been president since 1880, it has had steadily increasing success, and has been made justly famous by the careers of its professors, two of whom, James Strong, the Hebraist and voluminous author, and John Miley, the theologian, have recently died, the chairs being filled by men who bring the enthusiasm of youth and the most modern results of learning to their respective spheres. To the buildings given by the founder have been added a fine library hall, to which the largest contributor was John B. Cornell, a trustee, and the Hoyt-Bowne Dormitory, accommodating one hundred students. This beautiful edifice was the gift of William Hoyt and Samuel C. Bowne, trustees of the seminary.

Edward Thomson, the renowned president of the Ohio Wesleyan University, was succeeded by Frederick Merrick in 1860, who held the position thirteen years, and to him is the institution indebted for its financial prosperity and for valuable services in every capacity. For three years after his resignation L. D. McCabe, one of the original faculty, was acting president, at the expiration of which time Charles H. Payne was elected president, and gave successful years to the duties of the position. He was succeeded by J. W. Bashford, who has inspired faculty, trustees, and students with enthusiasm.

Dickinson College, whose long and diversified history is elsewhere outlined, under the leadership of President George E. Reed has established a law school, erected a commodious building, and increased the number of its students.

Syracuse University, one of the youngest, has accumulated property worth nearly \$2,000,000, and has a thousand students. One of the most remarkable events of its history occurred under the administration of Chancellor Sims, and was the erection of the Crouse Memorial College, costing nearly \$250,000. It was the gift of John Crouse, a citizen of Syracuse, a merchant, whose denominational affiliations were Presbyterian. Under the new impulse given by the election, as chancellor, of James R. Day, it is making rapid strides toward the fulfillment of the high thought of its founders. A thoroughly equipped law school has recently been established and the medical department reinforced.

The University of Denver, which was opened as such in 1880, and was for nine years thereafter under the chancellorship of D. H. Moore, already has theological, medical, and law departments, and has been the recipient of many benefactions, among them the Chamberlain Observatory and a handsome building, the Iliff School of Theology,—a gift of W. S. Iliff, an alumnus of the university, as a memorial of his father, John Wesley Iliff. Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren has endowed the School of Theology with \$100,000.

Cornell College, in Iowa, was named for William W. Cornell, of New York City, a benefactor of the institution. William F. King, the president, was elected thirty-one years ago, after having been acting president during the two preceding years, and the college enjoys the distinction of retaining its president longer than any other institution in Methodism has done.

Allegheny College, Pennsylvania, the alma mater of Bishops Simpson and Kingsley, and of William McKinley, of Ohio, after vicissitudes in recent years, promises permanence and improvement under the energetic management of its president, William H. Crawford.

The Illinois Wesleyan University, whose president is W. H. Wilder, reported, in 1895, 1625 students, and this notwithstanding the fact that Hedding College in the same State, under J. G. Evans, is prosperous.

Hamline University, named for Bishop Hamline, who presented it with \$25,000 as a foundation, has a fortunate location midway between Minneapolis and St. Paul, and, after many years of disaster, under the guidance of President G. H. Bridgman and a sagacious board of trustees has for some years been advancing with steady steps toward the realization of the ideal of a liberal education under denominational supervision.

Albion College, in Michigan, notwithstanding the tendency toward the vast university supported by the State, was never so prosperous as it now is under the management of President Fiske, who has been in charge of it for nineteen years.

Lawrence University, at Appleton, Wis., derived its original impulse from a proposition made by the noted Amos Lawrence, of Boston, Mass., himself not a Methodist, to give \$10,000, provided the Methodists of Wisconsin would raise an equal amount, to establish a college in that part of Wisconsin. The site of Appleton was then a wilderness; there was not a house for many miles, the building of the academic department being one of the first in the settlement. Its presidents have been eminent educators. Edward Cooke, who became favorably known as the first principal of Pennington Seminary, New Jersey (founded in 1839), was its first president; R. Z. Mason, George M. Steele, and B. P. Raymond were his successors.

The Central Tennessee College, under President Braden, at Nashville, has steadily gained until it is respected throughout the South.

The U. S. Grant University, at Athens and Chatta-

nooga, Tenn., formed by the union of a new institution with the East Tennessee University, was opened at Athens in 1865. The school of theology, already influential, the medical, pharmaceutical, and business colleges are at Chattanooga; the college, college preparatory, English, normal, and musical courses being conducted at Athens. Bishop I. W. Joyce is chancellor.

Boston University has had the rare experience of having but one president in the entire course of its history, William Fairfield Warren, whose plans have broadened even beyond the expectations of the founders and the resources furnished by later donors. Its law school has become renowned; its theological school is overcrowded, and all its departments are prospering, while several of its professors have united efficiency as instructors with wide reputations as authors, either in their specialties or in general literature.

The Northwestern University prospered under the brief presidency of Dr. Fowler, and when he was elected editor of the "Christian Advocate," Joseph Cummings, who was chosen to succeed him, brought to it the results of his eighteen years' experience in Wesleyan University; and, aided by a corporation whose members were not only able to devise great things but willing to contribute liberally to their execution, it constantly expanded. At the death of President Cummings, the university departed from the prevailing custom and selected, to fill the vacancy, a layman, Henry Wade Rogers, at that time dean of the law school of the University of Michigan. The number of students has continually increased, and new enterprises are projected.

Garrett Biblical Institute grew steadily in influence, under the presidencies of Ninde and Ridgaway, aided by a corps of professors of ability, among whom was the late professor of historical theology, Dr. Charles W. Bennett,

who produced a learned work on Christian archæology, the first on that subject which appeared on American soil. Upon the death of President Ridgeway, Professor Charles J. Little succeeded him, and the institution, with various changes already made or in progress, is better adapted to its work than ever before.

The Folts Mission Institute at Herkimer, N. Y., founded by Mr. and Mrs. George P. Folts by gifts in money and buildings amounting to more than \$50,000, was opened September 13, 1893. It does not design to compete with the academy, college, or theological seminary, but, while offering special facilities to those who intend to be foreign or home missionaries, it aims to furnish the best opportunities for all who propose to be Christian workers, whatever their field and whether or not they have been graduated from colleges.

Within little more than a decade has come into existence, and reached a higher position than many prosperous institutions have been able to attain in half a century, the Woman's College of Baltimore.

Many years ago a seminary was established within the bounds of the Baltimore Conference, but in an emergency, for the want of a few thousand dollars, it was sold to the Roman Catholics, with the effect of discouraging the conference. From time to time a canvassing committee was appointed, but nothing was accomplished. In 1882 John F. Goucher became a member of this committee, served one year, and subsequently maintained a close relation to it, finally becoming so much interested as to make the establishment of an institution for the education of women within the bounds of that conference one of the objects of his gifts in connection with the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was proposed to

establish an ordinary conference seminary, and division of sentiment arose in the conference; but at its session in 1883 it decided to establish an institution of the first grade for the higher education of women. The conference manifested its sincerity by pledging \$40,000, and during the succeeding year additional gifts swelled the amount to \$200,000. Just before the session of 1884 a board of trustees was organized, with E. G. Andrews, the resident bishop in Washington, as president. In 1885 the Woman's College of Baltimore was incorporated, and the first building and its site, the two valued at \$165,000, were the gift of John F. Goucher. The college was opened in September, 1888.

Since that time have been erected Bennett Hall, costing \$78,000, the Bennett Hall Annex, built at an outlay of \$54,600, the Catharine Belle Hooper Hall, on which, with its furnishings, was expended \$108,000, and four homes averaging \$75,000 each, together with valuable additions to the grounds, making a property worth \$868,000; and an endowment of nearly \$400,000 has been accumulated. The grounds cover six acres in the north-central section of the city, and the original plan contemplates seventeen buildings. The gymnasium is one of the finest in the country. The president is John F. Goucher, and the college has about five hundred students. Considered in connection with the amount of money contributed, the time in which the buildings were erected and furnished, the number of students, and the high rank universally accorded, it is the most extraordinary educational project that has arisen in Methodism in Europe or America.

An institution designed to extend its influence beyond the limits of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and hoping to derive sympathy and support from all American Methodism, is the American University. Nearly fifty years

ago Bishops Simpson and Ames suggested the wisdom of establishing at the capital, under the auspices of American Methodism, an institution of the highest grade; from 1880 to 1890 it was increasingly a subject of consideration, and when Bishop Hurst removed from Buffalo to Washington he became deeply interested in it. A site of ninety-two acres in the suburbs of Washington, the citizens of Washington subsequently furnishing the purchase price, \$100,000 (now valued at not less than four times its cost), was secured on the 25th of January, 1890, by the payment of an option of \$1000. In March a convention was held in the Metropolitan Church to promote its interests; on the 14th of April a letter and contribution were received from George Bancroft, the historian, and the 27th of that month was observed as University Sunday in the Methodist Episcopal churches of Washington. The bishops, at their spring meeting, approved the establishment of such a university, and in November of the same year a mass-meeting was held in Washington, at which a letter of approval and encouragement was read from President Harrison, and addresses were delivered by five of the bishops and others.

The university was organized at a meeting in Washington, May 28, 1891, and thirty-six trustees, a chancellor, secretary, and registrar were elected in August. Bishop Hurst, as chancellor, appealed to American Methodism for \$10,000,000 for buildings and endowments.

The General Conference of 1892 adopted the university, approved its trustees, and authorized an offering in Methodist Episcopal churches on Sunday the 16th of the following October, "provided that the endowment of the institution be not less than \$5,000,000 over and above its present real estate before any department of the university shall be opened."<sup>1</sup> Large gifts have been re-

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of General Conference of 1892," p. 472.



ceived. A gentleman in Ohio in 1893 increased the endowment by the gift of \$100,000; in 1894 a lady in New York gave more than \$100,000 for the endowment of a professorship in history. The same year the university was indorsed and approved by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and in 1895 \$150,000 were subscribed by the trustees for a Hall of History, the corner-stone of which was laid October 21, 1896; also a promise was received from General J. Watts de Peyster, of New York, of funds for the erection of the Hall of Languages.

The enterprise has been projected upon such a scale that many years will be required to complete it, but its completion and adequate endowment are within the bounds of possibility; and if, according to the plan, it is devoted exclusively to postgraduate work, it may become a true complement and culmination of that vast scheme of American Methodist education through church coöperation, to promote which the Methodist Episcopal Church has added \$800,000 a year for thirty years to its property devoted to that work, which furnishes facilities for the 43,322 students reported at the close of the year 1895.<sup>1</sup>

An educational system known as the Chautauqua movement, unique in the modern world, but finding its prototype in the academic groves of ancient Greece, was founded by John H. Vincent in the discharge of his duty as corresponding secretary of the Sunday-school Union and Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Convinced by observation and experience that Sunday-school teachers generally were imperfectly qualified for the responsible work, in 1874 a Sunday-school assembly was held at a place then known as Fair Point, on Chautauqua Lake,

<sup>1</sup> An official list of the colleges and universities under Methodist Episcopal auspices in the United States may be found in the Appendix, pp. 698, 699. There are sixty classical seminaries, in addition to those in foreign lands. The church has twenty distinctively theological institutions.

New York, which consists of a beautiful grove on a projecting point, the plan being that lectures should be delivered upon appropriate subjects, and teachers stimulated to a study of the Scriptures and instructed in practical religious training of children.

From that beginning the idea has so expanded that volumes have been devoted to its exposition, and progressive men from all parts of the world have visited the United States for the purpose of studying it and reproducing in their own countries its essential features. William R. Harper, president of the University of Chicago, in an article on John H. Vincent, "The Founder of the Chautauqua Movement,"<sup>1</sup> has produced in a single paragraph a luminous condensation: "If the word 'Chautauqua' signified only the local Chautauqua, with its assembly, its Sunday-school normal, its schools of sacred literature, its schools of philosophy, ancient literature, modern literature, mathematics, and science, its schools of physical culture, its schools of practical work in every line of effort, and its platform lectures given by men of every country and of highest position, the work would have been a great work and more than sufficient to secure a lasting fame. But it will be remembered that the local Chautauqua is something small and insignificant when compared with the world-wide Chautauqua. When we recall the scores of Chautauqua assemblies throughout the United States, the Oxford summer meeting established on the basis of the Chautauqua idea, the hundreds of thousands of readers who have been connected with the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, the tens of thousands of homes into which a new light has penetrated as a result of the Chautauqua idea, the hundreds of thousands of books which have been bought and read by those who were eager

<sup>1</sup> The "Outlook," September 26, 1896.

for a learning which had been denied them, we obtain a faint conception of the meaning and significance of the term 'Chautauqua.' "

In the Methodist Episcopal Church, prior to May 14, 1889, there were five young people's societies, each having its own name, aims, methods of work, and organization, and each striving to become the society for the whole church. It was everywhere felt that a union of the societies would promote the interests of youth and of the church as a whole. A call was made by the Young People's Methodist Alliance, the oldest and one of the largest, to all the societies to assemble at Cleveland, O. At this convention were present representatives of the Oxford League, the Young People's Christian League, the Methodist Young People's Union, the Young People's Methodist Episcopal Alliance of the North Ohio Conference, and the Young People's Methodist Alliance. After discussion and much prayer it was unanimously agreed that all existing societies be merged into one for the entire church, to be called the Epworth League and to be managed by a board of control. An elaborate plan consisting of eight sections was adopted; the society was organized, and J. L. Hurlbut, corresponding secretary of the Sunday-school Union and Tract Society, was elected its corresponding secretary. The plan was subsequently submitted to the societies represented, and accepted, which gave 900 local societies as a foundation. Six years later 14,719 chapters had been formed, with 3660 societies of Junior Epworth Leagues, and a membership of 1,250,000.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Church of Canada adopted the Epworth League, and the second international Convention was held June, 1895, at Chattanooga, Tenn.

The General Conference adopted the League, conserved

its interests in every way, and made the presidents of Epworth League chapters eligible to a seat in the Quarterly Conferences. The "Epworth Herald," under the editorship of Joseph F. Berry, has reached a weekly circulation of one hundred thousand.

The Board of Control is formed of a certain number of members appointed by the bishops, the others being elected by the General Conference districts. During May and June, 1895, were enrolled more than eighteen hundred regular and junior chapters. The general secretary is E. A. Schell.

A recent movement in the church is that known as the deaconess work. German Methodists had made much use of deaconesses, and the Mother House, in Frankfort, begun in 1874, and in 1876 having five deaconesses, by 1888 owned five large houses, with a clinical hospital, and kept ninety-nine deaconesses occupied.<sup>1</sup> The Chicago Training-school for City, Home, and Foreign Missions was founded in 1885, and in June, 1887, a few women from this school were banded together for work under direction of the superintendent and principal. The Rock River Conference addressed a memorial on the subject of deaconesses to the General Conference of 1888, and that of Bengal in India a petition for deaconesses to aid them in converting and edifying the inmates of the zenanas. The conference added to the Discipline a plan legalizing the establishment of such an office, and the Woman's Home Missionary Society found the new office preëminently adapted to its work, and has established deaconess homes in Baltimore, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Knoxville, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Portland, Ore., San Francisco, and other places. The first to be opened was the Elizabeth Gamble Deaconess Home in Cincinnati; the New York Home and

<sup>1</sup> "Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. ii., p. 337.

the Boston Home followed in 1889, and in 1890 six were organized.<sup>1</sup>

The value of property in 1895 already invested in deaconess work was \$558,900, of which \$173,700 belongs to the Woman's Home Missionary Society. The number of deaconesses and probationers is 535. There are 7 deaconess homes and 42 deaconesses in India, and 106 in Germany and Switzerland. According to the reports, in one year the deaconesses have made 138,794 visits, cared for 2062 sick persons at their homes, and two thirds as many more in hospitals.<sup>2</sup>

The first Methodist Home for the Aged and Infirm was organized in Philadelphia, June 14, 1865, and according to the last available report has one hundred and three inmates; the second was established in Baltimore in 1868, and has sixty-three on its roll; the next in New York in 1878, which at the last report had nineteen men and ninety-five women. The Brooklyn Methodist Episcopal Home was incorporated May 10, 1883, dedicated May 18, 1889, and has rooms for sixty inmates. The Old People's Home of the St. Louis German Conference was established in 1890 at Quincy, Ill., by gift of Charles Pfeiffer, who gave a building and an acre of land.

The interest in these homes is increasing, and the day will come when every city will open such a haven of rest, and in the smaller places provision be made for the care in private families of the worthy aged and infirm members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Institutions for orphans or other unfortunate children began in the Methodist Episcopal Church by the establishment of the Five Points Mission in New York City in 1850, in which forty thousand children have been aided; and in

<sup>1</sup> "Deaconesses," by Lucy Rider Meyer (Cranston & Stowe), pp. 64-72.

<sup>2</sup> "Methodist Year-book," 1896, p. 102, A. B. Sanford, editor.

October, 1895, a fine building, costing \$126,000 and now known as the Church of the People and Five Points Mission, superseded the former inadequate structure.

With this exception, German-American Methodists, as in several other important enterprises, were in advance of the rest of the church. They founded, in 1864, the Central Wesleyan Orphan Asylum, in Warrenton, Mo., and the German Methodist Orphan Asylum, at Berea, O. The former has fifty-five on its roll, and the latter one hundred and three. The Kelso Home, at Baltimore, Md., was founded by Thomas Kelso, Esq., who originated the idea and placed the Home upon a foundation by the gift of more than \$100,000, \$50,000 of which were expended in property; it is without debt, and its income meets its expenses.

The Methodist Episcopal Orphanage in Philadelphia was organized on December 2, 1878, by the wife of Bishop Simpson, and opened in January, 1879. It has twenty acres of ground, the gift of Colonel Joseph Bennett, who has made other large contributions. The value of the property is about \$250,000, the endowment fund \$100,000. It has one hundred and five inmates, and receives destitute children without regard to religious belief.

St. Christopher's Home was organized and opened in the city of New York. It now consists of a spacious mansion and five cottages on a tract of twelve acres at Dobbs Ferry, N. Y. One of the cottages remains closed for lack of funds. It is supported by voluntary contributions, and its annual expenditures are about \$18,000. At the last report it had under its care one hundred and thirty-nine boys and girls.

The only orphanage west of the Rocky Mountains under the auspices of the church was opened at Fruitvale, Cal., January 1, 1892. It is named the Fred Finch Orphanage,

and has \$18,000 worth of property, but receives some aid from the State. It has a capacity for one hundred and twenty children, and at the last report had ninety-five and was out of debt.

The Watts de Peyster Industrial School and Home, under the management of the New York Conference branch of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, is situated at Tivoli, N. Y. The estimated value of its property, which was the gift of General De Peyster, is \$60,000. It aims to instruct girls in domestic work and to give them mental and moral training until they are eighteen years of age.

The Epworth Children's Home, of Chicago, was founded in 1893 by Adelaide Abbott. It accommodates twenty-five, and in the brief period of its existence over one hundred and thirty children have been turned away for lack of room.

The "Christian Advocate" of January 27, 1881, in an editorial entitled "Methodism and Charitable Institutions," said: "The time has come when the Methodist Episcopal Church should turn its attention to providing charitable foundations. It is to-day without a hospital, a bed in a hospital, a dispensary, etc. . . . We are far behind other leading Protestant churches in respect to charitable institutions. . . . Now that we have supplied ourselves with schools, colleges, theological seminaries, missionary, Church Extension, and Freedmen's Aid societies, is it not time that somewhere we built an asylum or a hospital?"

It was stated that St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Hospital had treated eight hundred and eighty-three Methodists, and the Presbyterian Hospital, during the preceding year, thirty-four of that denomination. The closing sentences of the editorial were: "We have built churches for ourselves and our families. Would it not be

well for us soon to build something for all mankind? Shall Romanism seem to be truer to the benevolent side of the gospel than we are?" It was hoped that these words would lead to the beginning in a small way of a Methodist Episcopal general hospital in Brooklyn or New York. Within a few days George I. Seney, son of the Rev. Robert Seney, one of the earliest Methodist preachers who received a collegiate education, said to the editor, "I approve the sentiments expressed in your paper as to the duty of the Methodist Episcopal Church to give more attention to organized charity, and believing that the time has fully come for us, in addition to building churches and endowing educational institutions, to do our share in hospital work, I offer you as a site sixteen eligible lots in Brooklyn, N. Y., valued at \$40,000, and \$100,000 in cash toward the establishment and erection of a hospital—the institution to be a Methodist general hospital, but open to Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, heathen and infidel, on the same terms."

Before there was time to announce the offer, this philanthropist addressed a letter to the editor as follows:

"MY DEAR SIR: I have read with great interest the two pamphlets you left with me. You may make my subscription \$200,000 instead of \$100,000.

"Very sincerely yours,

"GEORGE I. SENEY."

This amount was by him increased to \$410,000 in property and money, and at the same time he was making many other gifts to benevolent and educational institutions. Subsequently he met with unexpected financial embarrassments, but after he had recuperated to some extent he exhibited his interest in the hospital by further contribu-



tions, and until his death declared that he had derived more pleasure from those gifts than from any others. This institution, whose legal title is the "Methodist Episcopal Hospital in the City of Brooklyn, N. Y.," was opened for the reception of patients December 15, 1887. The value of its property is \$800,000, besides an accumulated endowment fund of more than \$212,000, included in which are thirty-five beds endowed by gifts of \$5000 for each. No distinction of race or religion is allowed, and more than ten thousand patients have been treated. Admissions turn upon these questions: Is the case suitable for a general hospital, and is there room? When the buildings are completed it is expected there will be accommodations for two hundred and fifty.

About four months after Mr. Seney made his gift, Scott Stewart, M.D., of Philadelphia, died, bequeathing his residuary estate for the establishment of a Methodist hospital in that city. It was incorporated February 14, 1885, and opened April 21, 1892. It has six buildings in use, and its property, including endowments, represents \$570,000.

The hospital in Portland, Ore., was incorporated in 1887, and has assets amounting to about \$100,000.

The Elizabeth Gamble Deaconess Home and Christ's Hospital, the gift of the Gamble family, was opened in Cincinnati in 1888; five years later it was removed to Mount Auburn, a suburb, and now has property valued at \$100,000. Only deaconesses are employed as nurses.

Wesley Hospital, in Chicago, Ill., the work of which is largely surgical, is seven years old, and, like the Brooklyn and Philadelphia hospitals, it maintains a training-school for nurses.

The Methodist Episcopal Hospital at Omaha, Neb., was organized May 28, 1891, in connection with the Deaconess

Home, and contains thirty beds. It is prosperous, but has not yet accumulated endowments or any considerable property.

The Asbury Methodist Hospital and Rebecca Deaconess Home, of Minneapolis, Minn., was opened September 1, 1892. It occupies a large brick building valued at \$35,000, and has a capacity of fifty-three beds. During the last two years it has treated 821 hospital cases, and 3921 patients in the free dispensary under the charge of deaconesses, besides answering a large number of ambulance calls; it publishes a quarterly called the "Hospital and Home Messenger."

The Kansas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church sustains Bethany Hospital, in Kansas City, Kan. It was opened in May, 1892, in a rented building, but now has a property valued at \$11,000. It issues the "Bethany Visitor," a monthly, is the only Protestant hospital in Kansas, and treated three hundred patients during the past year.

The Deaconess Home and Hospital of St. Louis, Mo., began its work September 7, 1892. It has but sixteen beds, and during 1895 treated seventy-five patients, of whom thirty-one paid nothing or an insignificant amount.

The Sibley Memorial Hospital, Washington, D. C., erected by a gift from W. J. Sibley, will accommodate twenty patients. It was opened March 25, 1895, and is connected with the National Training-school for Missionaries and the Deaconess Home; all are under the direction of the Woman's Home Missionary Society.

The New England Deaconess Hospital, under the direction of the New England Deaconess Home and Training-school, was declared, on January 1, 1896, ready to receive patients. Immediately adjoining the home<sup>1</sup> a

<sup>1</sup> For additional particulars concerning hospitals and other enterprises, see "Methodist Year-book," 1896.

house of seventeen rooms, on Massachusetts Avenue, has been purchased and thoroughly fitted for hospital purposes.

This philanthropic movement is destined to spread until every large city in the Union will contain such a hospital, and it will be recognized that, though Methodists entered upon this phase of beneficent activity later than most other religious bodies, their zeal and liberality have been stimulated by that fact.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND OUTLOOK.

THE early history of American Methodism is a record of toil, hardship, self-denial, frugality, and intense devotion; abstinence was required from all forms of dissipation, from every amusement of an evil or absorbing nature, and from worldly display. Systematic giving was the rule, and all the pecuniary resources of the church were utilized. The conversion of souls was the principal object. Special attention was given to the poor and to children and youth, and total abstinence from intoxicating liquors was enforced, until no body of Christians, except the Society of Friends, was so universally temperate and so generally abstinent.

The divisions in Methodism arose from causes which in all ages have produced ecclesiastical controversy, and which, with the decline of genuine unity and individual devotion, lead to rupture when not suppressed by force, or to external decay unless the church is sustained by the state, and to infidelity and immorality in large degree where the outward forms of religion are maintained by endowments or taxation; namely, differences of judgment concerning discipline, ceremony, and doctrine, and, more potent than all, the personal ambitions of men who when disappointed become embittered, or when successful grow insupportable by reason of the spirit of tyranny engendered.

All these causes, except radical divergencies of doctrine, can be traced in the development of American Methodism.

Yet it has nearly five millions of communicants in the United States alone, the vast majority of whom have been received by conversion. The influence which has led so great a multitude to affiliate with Methodism is the power of the fundamental principles of Christianity as taught and preached by it, the attractiveness of its services, and the hand-to-hand conflicts waged by pastors and people against the powers of darkness.

By its stimulus and example it has powerfully affected other religious bodies, with resulting modifications in their spirit and methods in preaching, singing, exhortation, lay coöperation, and revivals. By the number of attendants at other churches who were converted among Methodists and returned to their former associations carrying this spirit, and by the countless revivals kindled by their zeal which have spread through entire communities, much has been contributed to the vitality, and consequently to the permanent growth, of other religious denominations. Ministers who have changed their views and entered other Christian churches, carrying with them the peculiar zeal and working plans of Methodism, have contributed a similar influence, which a large proportion of those who have been the subjects of it have gladly acknowledged.

It is proper that Methodism should render such contributions, since it owes so much of spiritual impulse to the Moravians, derived its liturgy from the Church of England, was trained in analysis and argumentation in the conflicts made necessary by the stalwart resistance of the Calvinistic bodies to what they supposed to be its dangerous departures from sound doctrine, and after invading New England was liberalized by the democratic spirit of its Congregational form of government, and prevented by

the intellectual vigor and ceaseless activity of the American Baptists from placing too strong a reliance upon a sacramentarian view of the baptism of infants.

As Methodism has grown in wealth, and its educational enterprises have modified the views and refined the tastes and manners of its people, immigration from other religious denominations through marriage has increased; and the growth of the spirit of Christian unity has operated in the same direction, until within the past quarter of a century the separating walls of denominations have become less and less palpable.

Prophecy is beyond the sphere of the historian, but his domain extends to the utmost margin of the present.

Whether there are marked tendencies to organic union of the different branches of Methodism is a question difficult to determine. Addresses, however fervent, upon complimentary occasions indicate little; often, indeed, they are followed by reaction. Gladstone, whose all-inclusive genius irradiates if it does not illuminate every subject, has recently said:

“Religious controversies do not, like bodily wounds, heal by the genial force of nature. If they do not proceed to gangrene and to mortification, at least they tend to harden into fixed facts, to incorporate themselves with law, character, and tradition, nay, even with language; so that at last they take rank among the data and presuppositions of common life, and are thought as inexpugnable as the rocks of an iron-bound coast. A poet of ours describes the sharp and total severance of two early friends:

‘They parted, ne’er to meet again,  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining.  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;  
A dreary sea now rolls between.’”

Certainly among American Methodists the scars grow less and less visible, the tides now frequently cover the cliffs. The spirit of fraternity is generally manifest; brotherly kindness is of near kin to unity, and organic union may be safely left to the further evolution of experience.

The deeper question is, Has Methodism lost to a dangerous degree its original vital impulse? No attention need be paid to ecclesiastical pessimists who allege that every departure from the past shows a tendency in the wrong direction. Methodism as represented by many of its early converts had defects of theory and practice which denominational pride or amiability has often covered with the veil of charity or forgetfulness; but as the Master rebuked the disciples for not discerning the signs of the times, there is always a place for self-examination of the individual and devout consideration of the state of the church. The history of Christianity shows that the time when such heart-searchings should be made is when the distinction between the world and the church is faintly marked, and transitions are so easy and frequent as not to attract attention, and when luxury waits upon liberality.

The founders of Methodism had no enterprises that were not distinctly subordinate to the conversion of men and their spiritual training. Now its enterprises are many and complex, often pervaded by a distinctly secular element, which contends constantly with the spiritual. Yet the flames of pure devotion burn upon many an altar, accessions by conversion are numerous, many preachers deliver truth in the power of the Holy Ghost, and every society contains those who cry continually, "Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?"

All these institutions can be rendered tributary to the great work for which Methodism was established. If the seminaries, colleges, and universities retain the spirit of

evangelical piety and the peculiar fervor of Methodism; if the Book Concerns give to spiritual religion and sound doctrine the chief place in their publications; if the missionary societies shall more and more base the duty and privilege of giving not upon influences that appeal to pride or personal ambition, but upon the needs of the world and the allegiance of the church to Christ; if the Society for Church Extension shall seek to promote not extravagant architecture, but the most hygienic, commodious, and attractive churches; if all analogous organizations shall remember that to make men wise for this world only is to do them irreparable damage; and if the Sunday-schools and Epworth League shall train young people to pray, to exhort, to spread the news of salvation wherever they go, these enterprises will all promote the original purposes of Methodism, as Wesley's zeal was not diminished by his philanthropy, or by his interest in the dissemination of learning.

Eight years before the death of that man of both worlds, burning with zeal for God and humanity, having seen the scattered Methodists of the United States organized by his direction into an episcopal church, he wrote in London a brief essay entitled "Thoughts on Methodism." The solemn words of his opening paragraph may fitly close this record of the intervening period:

"I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America; but I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power; and this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."



# APPENDICES.

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## APPENDIX I.<sup>1</sup>

### GENERAL RULES OF THE UNITED SOCIETIES.

[As originally prepared by the signers.]

1. IN the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), I gave those advices, from time to time, which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

2. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London, and then in other places. Such a society is no

<sup>1</sup> See p. 91.

other than "a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

3. That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called *classes*, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every class, one of whom is styled *the leader*. It is his business (1) To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor. (2) To meet the minister and stewards of the society once a week, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly and will not be reproved; to pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding; and to show their account of what each person has contributed.

4. There is only one condition previously required in those who desire admission into these societies—a desire "to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins": but wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:

First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially that which is most generally practiced: such is the taking the name of God in vain; the profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling; drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases

of extreme necessity; fighting, quarreling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling; the buying or selling uncustomed goods; the giving or taking things on usury, that is, unlawful interest; uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers; doing to others as we would not they should do unto us; doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as the "putting on of gold or costly apparel," the taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus, the singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God; softness and needless self-indulgence; laying up treasures upon earth; borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

5. It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:

Secondly, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible to all men: to their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison; to their souls by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all that they have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "we are not to do good unless our heart be free to it"; by doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them only; by all possible diligence and frugality, that the

gospel be not blamed; by running with patience the race that is set before them, "denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily;" submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should "say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake."

6. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:

Thirdly, by attending upon all the ordinances of God. Such are the public worship of God; the ministry of the Word, either read or expounded; the Supper of the Lord; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures; and fasting, or abstinence.

7. These are the general rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these, we know, his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways; we will bear with him for a season; but then if he repent not he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

May 1, 1743.

JOHN WESLEY,  
CHARLES WESLEY.

## APPENDIX II.<sup>1</sup>

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE RELATIVE TO THE REGULATING AND PERPETUATING GENERAL CONFERENCES IN THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1808.

[As printed in the "Journal."]

1. THE General Conference shall be composed of delegates from the Annual Conferences.
2. The delegates shall be chosen by ballot, without debate, in the Annual Conferences respectively, in the last meeting of conference previous to the meeting of the General Conference.
3. Each Annual Conference respectively shall have a right to send seven elders, members of their conference, as delegates to the General Conference.
4. Each Annual Conference shall have a right to send one delegate, in addition to the seven, for every ten members belonging to such conference over and above fifty. So that if there be sixty members they shall send eight; if seventy they shall send nine; and so on in proportion.
5. The General Conference shall meet on the first day of May, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and twelve; and thenceforward on the first day of May once in four years perpetually, at such place or places as shall be fixed on by the General Conference from time to time.
6. At all times, when the General Conference is met, it

<sup>1</sup> See p. 331.

shall take two thirds of the whole number of delegates to form a quorum.

7. One of the original superintendents shall preside in the General Conference; but in case no general superintendent be present, the General Conference shall choose a president *pro tem*.

8. The General Conference shall have full powers to make rules, regulations, and canons for our church, under the following limitations and restrictions, viz.:—

The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards of doctrine.

They shall not lessen the number of seven delegates from each Annual Conference, nor allow of a greater number from any Annual Conference than is provided in the fourth paragraph of this section.

They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or to destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.

They shall not revoke or change the general rules of our united societies.

They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the society or by a committee, of an appeal.

They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern or of the Charter Fund to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, superannuated, supernumerary, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children.

*Provided*, nevertheless, that upon the joint recommendation of all the Annual Conferences, then a majority of two thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions.

### APPENDIX III.<sup>1</sup>

#### REPORT OF THE "COMMITTEE OF NINE."

[On plan for "mutual and friendly division of the church."]

WHEREAS, A declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with the signatures of *fifty-one* delegates of the body, from thirteen Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the object and purposes of the Christian ministry and church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and,

WHEREAS, In the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration asks attention as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled,

1. That, should the delegates from the Conferences in the slave-holding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary of such connection:—All the societies, stations, and Conferences adhering to the Church in the South, by a vote of the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 448.

majority of the members of said societies, stations, and Conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in no wise attempt to organize churches or societies within the limits of the Church South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the South reciprocally observe the same rule in relations to stations, societies, and Conferences adhering, by vote of a majority, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; *Provided* also that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and Conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that church within whose territory they are situated.

2. That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the Methodist Episcopal Church, may, as they prefer, remain in that church, or without blame attach themselves to the Church South.

3. *Resolved*, by the delegates of all the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That we recommend to all the Annual Conferences, at their first approaching sessions, to authorize a change of the Sixth Restrictive Article, so that the first clause shall read thus: "They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern nor of the Chartered Fund to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children, and to such other purposes as may be determined upon by the votes of two thirds of the members of the General Conference."

4. That whenever the Annual Conferences, by a vote of three fourths of all their members, voting on the third



resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the Sixth Restrictive Article, the Agents at New York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to deliver over to any authorized agent or appointee of the Church South, should one be authorized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers, church-members, or citizens within its boundaries, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the Southern Church; and that said Agents also convey to the aforesaid agent or appointee of the South all the real estate, and assign to him all the property, including presses, stock, and all right and interests connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, which now belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

5. That when the Annual Conferences shall have approved the aforesaid change in the Sixth Restrictive Article, there shall be transferred to the above agent of the Southern Church so much of the capital and produce of the Methodist Book Concern as will, with the notes, book accounts, presses, etc., mentioned in the last resolution, bear the same proportion to the whole property of said Concern that the traveling preachers in the Southern Church shall bear to all the traveling ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the division to be made on the basis of the number of traveling preachers in the forthcoming Minutes.

6. That the above transfer shall be in the form of annual payments of \$25,000 per annum, and specifically in stock of the Book Concern and in Southern notes and accounts due the establishment, and accruing after the first transfer mentioned above; and until the payments are made the Southern Church shall share in all the net profits of the Book Concern in the proportion that the amount

due them, or in arrears, bears to all the property of the Concern.

7. That Nathan Bangs, George Peck, and James B. Finley be, and they are hereby, appointed commissioners to act in concert with the same number of commissioners appointed by the Southern organization (should one be formed), to estimate the amount which will fall due to the South by the preceding rule, and to have full power to carry into effect the whole arrangement proposed with regard to the division of property, should the separation take place. And if by any means a vacancy occurs in this board of commissioners the Book Committee at New York shall fill that vacancy.

8. That whenever any agents of the Southern Church are clothed with legal authority or corporate power to act in the premises, the Agents at New York are hereby authorized and directed to act in concert with said Southern agents, so as to give the provisions of these resolutions a legally binding force.

9. That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in meeting-houses, parsonages, colleges, schools, Conference funds, cemeteries, and of every kind within the limits of the Southern organization, shall be forever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises.

10. That the church so formed in the South shall have a common property in all the copyrights in possession of the Book Concerns in New York and Cincinnati at the time of the settlement by the commissioners.

11. That the Book-Agents at New York be directed to make such compensation to the Conferences South for their dividend from the Chartered Fund as the commissioners to be provided for shall agree upon. \*

12. That the bishops be respectfully requested that that part of this report requiring the action of the Annual Conferences be laid before them as soon as possible, beginning with the New York Conference.

The names of the committee were: Robert Paine, chairman, Glexen Filmore, Peter Akers, Nathan Bangs, Thomas Crowder, Thomas B. Sargent, William Winans, Leonidas L. Hamline, James Porter.

APPENDIX IV.<sup>1</sup>  
 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

OFFICIAL LIST OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

[As printed in Report of Board of Education.]

NAME OF INSTITUTION.	LOCATION.	PRESENT CHIEF OFFICER.
1 Albion College .....	Albion, Mich.	Rev. L. R. Fiske, D.D., LL.D., President.
2 Allegheny College .....	Meadville, Pa.	Rev. William H. Crawford, D.D., President.
3 Baker University .....	Baldwin, Kan.	Rev. J. H. Murlin, A.M., S.T.B., President.
4 Baldwin University .....	Berea, O.	M. F. Warner, A.M., B.D., M.D., President.
5 Black Hills College .....	Hot Springs, S. Dak.	Rev. J. W. Hancher, A.M., S.T.D., President.
6 Boston University .....	Boston, Mass.	Rev. Wm. F. Warren, S.T.D., LL.D., President.
7 Central Tennessee College .....	Nashville, Tenn.	Rev. J. Braden, D.D., President.
8 Central Wesleyan College .....	Warrenton, Mo.	Rev. George B. Addecks, A.B., A.M., President.
9 Chadlock College .....	Quincy, Ill.	Rev. B. W. Baker, M.A., Ph.D., President.
10 Charles City College .....	Charles City, Ia.	J. F. Hirsch, A.M., President.
11 Clafin University .....	Orangeburg, S. C.	Rev. L. M. Dunton, A.M., D.D., President.
12 Clark University .....	South Atlanta, Ga.	Rev. D. C. John, A.M., D.D., President.
13 Cornell College .....	Mount Vernon, Ia.	Rev. W. F. King, D.D., LL.D., President.
14 Dakota University .....	Mitchell, S. Dak.	Rev. W. I. Graham, A.M., D.D., President.
15 De Pauw University .....	Greencastle, Ind.	Rev. H. A. Gobin, D.D., Acting President.
16 Dickinson College .....	Carlisle, Pa.	Rev. George E. Keed, D.D., LL.D., President.
17 Fort Worth University .....	Fort Worth, Tex.	Rev. Oscar L. Fisher, A.M., D.D., President.
18 German Wallace College .....	Berea, O.	Rev. C. Riemenschneider, President.
19 Hamline University .....	Hamline, Minn.	Rev. G. H. Bridgman, D.D., President.
20 Hedding College .....	Abingdon, Ill.	Rev. J. G. Evans, D.D., LL.D., President.
21 Illinois Wesleyan University .....	Bloomington, Ill.	Rev. W. H. Wilder, M.A., D.D., President.
22 Iowa Wesleyan University .....	Mount Pleasant, Ia.	Rev. C. L. Stafford, A.M., D.D., President.
23 Kansas Wesleyan University .....	Salina, Kan.	Rev. Edward W. Mueller, A.M., S.T.B., Pres.

24	Lawrence University	Appleton, Wis	Rev. Samuel Plantz, D.D., Ph.D., President.
25	McKendree College	Lebanon, Ill.	McKendree II. Chamberlin, A.M., LL.B., Pres.
26	Moore's Hill College	Moore's Hill, Ind.	Rev. J. H. Martin, A.M., D.D., President.
27	Morgan College	Baltimore, Md.	Rev. F. J. Wagner, A.M., D.D., President.
28	Mount Pleasant German College	Mount Pleasant, Ia.	Rev. Frederick Munz, A.M., President.
29	Mount Union College	Alliance, O.	Rev. T. P. Marsh, D.D., LL.D., President.
30	Nebraska Wesleyan University	University Place, Neb.	C. M. ELLINWOOD, Acting Chancellor.
31	New Orleans University	New Orleans, La.	Rev. L. G. Adkinson, A.M., D.D., President.
32	Northwestern University	Evanston, Ill.	Henry Wade Rogers, A.M., LL.D., President.
33	Ohio Wesleyan University	Delaware, O.	Rev. James W. Bashford, D.D., Ph.D., Pres.
34	Philander Smith College	Little Rock, Ark.	Rev. Thomas Mason, A.M., D.D., President.
35	Portland University	Portland, Ore.	Rev. C. C. Stratton, A.M., D.D., President.
36	Puget Sound University	Tacoma, Wash.	Rev. C. K. Thoburn, A.M., Chancellor.
37	Red River Valley University	Wahpeton, N. Dak.	Rev. M. V. E. Knox, D.D., Ph.D., President.
38	Rust University	Holly Springs, Miss.	Rev. C. E. Libby, S.T.D., President.
39	St. Paul's College	St. Paul Park, Minn.	Rev. C. W. Hertzler, A.B., President.
40	Sto College	Scio, O.	Rev. R. M. Freshwater, A.M., D.D., Acting Pres.
41	Simpson College	Indianola, Ia.	Rev. Fletcher Brown, A.M., B.D., President.
42	Southwest Kansas College	Winfield, Kan.	Rev. C. A. Place, A.M., B.D., President.
43	Syracuse University	Syracuse, N. Y.	Rev. James K. Day, S.T.D., Chancellor.
44	Taylor University	Upland, Ind.	Rev. T. C. Reade, A.M., B.D., President.
45	Union College	Barbourville, Ky.	Rev. Daniel Stevenson, A.M., D.D., President.
46	University of Denver	Denver, Colo.	Rev. William F. McDowell, Ph.D., D.D., Chan.
47	University of the Pacific	San Francisco, Cal.	Rev. J. N. Beard, A.M., D.D., President.
48	University of Southern California	Los Angeles, Cal.	Rev. G. W. White, A.M., President.
49	Upper Iowa University	Fayette, Ia.	Rev. John W. Bissell, A.M., D.D., President.
50	U. S. Grant University	Athens and Chattanooga, Tenn.	Bishop I. W. Joyce, LL.D., Chancellor.
51	Wesleyan University	Middletown, Conn.	Rev. B. P. Raymond, D.D., LL.D., President.
52	Wiley University	Marshall, Tex.	Rev. I. B. Scott, D.D., President.
53	Willamette University	Salem, Ore.	Rev. Willis C. Hawley, A.M., President.
54	Woman's College of Baltimore	Baltimore, Md.	Rev. J. F. Goucher, A.M., D.D., President.



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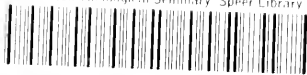






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